

Q and A with Eckhart Tolle TV Part 3

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 57:04)

In the flower there is no more, in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied, and it satisfies nature in all moments alike. There is no time to it, but man postpones or remembers.

He does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present above time. There you have the rose teaching Emerson how to live, and then he put it into words.

And this shows us that he actually, it was not just a superficial look at a rose as one would normally, oh, what a nice rose, there was a true, he truly gave attention to the rose and realized how absolutely present the rose is, how absolutely devoid of time it is, carrying no past and no future. And he recognized that, same as Jesus did when he said, look at the flowers of the field, look at the lilies. When he said that, he didn't just say, have a look at the lilies, he said, really look, give it your full attention, and then you will realize something there that human beings, there's a connectedness with being, they haven't gone out as far as humans, they have not left the source of all life, they have not become as differentiated as the humans have, so therefore what they can teach us, show us, is the connectedness with the source of all life. And that's what he saw when he looked at the rose. And then he realized that we can, when we reconnect with that, we don't just become, go back to the vegetative realm, which is beautiful for everything vegetative there, but not for us, it's not our destiny to go back to become a rose, or a tree, or a blade of grass, we transcend the thinking stage, we transcend the differentiation of the thinking stage and we then regain the oneness that was once lost, that ancient mythologies point to as the lost paradise. And when you regain something, as I often point out, you regain it at a deeper level with knowing consciousness.

And so the last sentence here is important, he saw here, of course, that usually man does not live in the present, but with reverted eyes, reverted eyes, he doesn't look at what's right here, he reverts his eyes and looks, laments the past, oh dear, regrets about what happened, guilt, regret, memories, things went wrong in my life situation, this happened, that happened, or heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future, I need to get, I need to get there, where is it?

I need to get to the next moment, heedless of the riches that surround you that are part of the now. So the lesson then is to truly look so that something imparts itself to you from anything natural. So the anything natural reconnects you with, can reconnect you with being.

By the way, when he uses, he wrote in the 19th century, so there was still a tendency for

there to use male pronouns, the same as the Bible and so on, so obviously when he says man, he means man and woman, and he tends to use the masculine pronoun, so you have to excuse that. Man is a stream whose source is hidden, always our being is descending into us from we know not whence. Most humans regard themselves as a surface phenomenon, you are here, no sense of deeper connectedness with life, you are here like as if somebody had put you here on this planet and there's me and there's the rest of the world, the rest of the universe, the lack of connectedness.

If you go deeper within and you do it by finding the dimension of stillness underneath thinking, then you connect with the source, the depth within yourself and there's vast depth. Man is a stream whose source is hidden and when, once it's open, so all you have to really do, if you can even call it doing, is open the door and even that is not a doing because really keeping the door closed through continuous thinking is the doing. So it's more like a stop doing and then it opens.

In that sense, some of those teachers are right saying you can't do anything because it's the doing that obscures the being. And so once that is open, then you gradually learn to do and be at the same time. You can act without losing connect.

At first you find it only in very still moments, perhaps in nature, and you go, ah, ah, and then gradually you see if you can stay connected when you're going shopping for food, supermarket, or traveling from here to there, carrying alertness, alert presence, rather than continuously thinking entity, always about the next moment or the last moment. This is the only, you may have noticed that I only ever talk about one thing. And this is it.

Now he uses in one of his essays the term the over-soul and by over-soul he means the unity of all things, the unity, the oneness of all things. All things are ultimately one. Not only that all things are connected to everything else, which physicists now tell us is actually the case, there's no division between this body and this table and this flower and those other bodies, there's no real division on the subatomic realm.

And so not only is everything connected with everything else, a web of interconnectedness, but also everything is connected to a common source. It has come out of the common source. It returns to the common source, which is formless and timeless, and the common source remains in every form as its innermost essence.

And so this common source, this unity he calls the over-soul. And he says, that unity, that over-soul within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other, that common heart of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission, that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents and constrains everyone to pass for what he is and to speak from his character, which means from his essence, and not from his tongue, and which evermore tends and aims to pass into our thought and hand and become wisdom and virtue and power and beauty. We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime, within man is

the soul of the whole, the wise silence, the universal beauty to which every part and particle is equally related, the eternal one.

And this deep power in which we exist, and whose beatitude is all accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object are one. We see the world piece by piece as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree, but the whole of which these are the shining parts is the soul, the oneness, oneness, seeing the oneness behind the multiplicity, seeing the oneness of all forms in every form. And what he calls the soul, we could also use the word the consciousness, the one unconditioned consciousness that pervades the entire universe, the one reality.

So when he says here the soul, if you want to use consciousness as a different pointer, that's fine. All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs, is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet, is not a faculty, but a light, is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will, is the vast background of our being in which they lie, an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed.

From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing but the light is all, the background, the background space, consciousness looks through these eyes, speaks through this mouth, becomes form and yet remains untouched as a formless. So can you go through life dealing with the foreground of things that need doing, things that you need occasionally to think about and yet remain aware of the background to your life, the consciousness, the light of consciousness or the space in which everything appears. Another way of putting it, can you be aware that you are aware at this moment, can you sense the awareness underneath what you are perceiving with your senses at this moment without which there would be no perception, can you sense the awareness underneath any kind of emotion or feeling you might be having at this moment, can you sense the awareness out of which any thought that might arise in your mind at this moment comes and dissolves back into the presence that you are, that's the formless, that's the timeless and so that is the vast background of your being, an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed.

A man is the façade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What you see is the façade of the temple, not only what you see as the physical form of this human being but also the psychological form of this human being is also the façade still of the temple, it is not in essence who that being is. What we commonly call man or woman, the eating, drinking, planting and counting man, eating, drinking, planting, counting, doing all kinds of things, what we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planting, counting man does not as we know him represent himself but misrepresents himself.

Him we do not respect but the soul whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect it is genius, when it breathes through his will it is virtue, when it flows through his affection it is love and the blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself. The weakness of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself.

So the blindness of the intellect begins with the belief that you are something of yourself, that is the mind, the self-serving mind. The weakness of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself, that is the independent, autonomous, self-sufficient entity that has been put into this world from somewhere, not realizing you have come out of it and you are an intrinsic part of the totality and so there comes the sense of separateness, of alienation, with that comes the continuous neediness of the ego and with that comes the continuous underlying fear.

It is always there when you are not connected, there is fear no matter what you may have achieved in the world of form, the fear will not leave you until the sense of separateness leaves you, you reconnect. How wonderful to see that all spiritual teachings in essence are one. This is why I love to go back to some of the ancient books and they might use very different words, but once you recognize the truth in yourself, you see the truth wherever it comes, in whatever form it comes, and you say, yes, there it is, I recognize it.

And so this is sometimes being called the perennial philosophy, there is a thread that goes back thousands of years, the same truth being expressed in different words and different forms throughout the ages, in the past by very rare individuals here and there, but somehow it survived, whatever form they left behind, writing, it survived. Somehow there were always enough humans who had at least an inkling that there was something extremely precious and valuable there. So that's the perennial philosophy, I don't know who first used that word, there is a very wonderful book by Aldous Huxley of the same title, Perennial Philosophy.

So the truth is there and there is no arguing once you have it in yourself, you don't attach yourself to the form in which it's being expressed, that's what religions traditionally do, you get attached to the form, not realizing the form points to an underlying essence, which is one, all religions are one, and you don't even need a religion to see the essence, you are enough. If you have a religion, fine, you don't need it, but if you have it, it can take you, if you use it rightly, it can take you deeper. If you use it wrongly, you get more entangled in ego through your religion.

There is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases and God, the cause, begins. There is no separation between you and the source, it's a continuous, you could almost think of it, if you think of it visually, you are connected, if you are walking around a globe, and every being on the globe is connected to the center with a thread, it's a

visual representation of it, you are connected. Now if the surface reality of where you are walking around is all you have, then you see the separation between you and the other human being, or other life form, you see the separateness.

When you are aware of the center within, then you see the unity. So, you are walking around this globe, there is one human being, here is another human being, disconnected because they are only aware of the surface. If you are aware of the depths within yourself, then suddenly you see that you are one with the other, you are connected at the center.

It's a visual, of course, somewhat incomplete representation. The sovereignty of this nature whereof we speak is made known by its independency of those limitations which circumscribe us on every hand. The soul circumscribes all things.

As I have said, it contradicts all experience. In like manner, it abolishes time and space. The influence of the senses has, in most men, overpowered the mind to that degree that the walls of time and space have come to look solid, real and insurmountable.

And to speak with levity of these limits is, in the world, a sign of insanity. Yet time and space are but inverse measures of the force of the soul. A man is capable of abolishing them both.

You could say, now when he uses inverse measures, you could say, I said that somewhere also, you could, the vastness of space that you see when you look out at night into the clear sky, and that was when I was a child, even before, no, about the same time when I had mentioned previously I would often go out into nature to reconnect with being when I was a child. And one other thing I did that helped me when I was a child, and that didn't happen until I went to live in Spain at the age of 13 and a half, where often the sky is clear, especially in the summer, and so we lived on the top floor with a, I would climb up onto the roof of the building at night and lie in a deck chair and just look at the vastness of the night sky. And I didn't realize at that time that my mind actually became still.

I was just in a state of awe, and I didn't realize at the time, I didn't even know anything about meditation, I didn't know I was in a state of meditative stillness, and there was a sense of awe and of feeling speechless. And what made me speechless was not the, well, it was wonderful to see all the thousands of points of light that we call stars or suns, but more than that, the vastness of the space itself. I already knew a little bit, I was interested in astronomy and I started reading and I knew a little bit about the vast distances involved there and the vastness of space, of what a idea is, and it was so inconceivable and totally beyond anything the mind could understand.

Even the greatest scientists cannot understand the limitless space. So I sometimes ask myself, well, what is beyond space? And if it's limitless, it's inconceivable.

There's a vastness there that is totally ungraspable and inconceivable. And that, I believe, what he's pointing at, Emerson, here, is what you see as the vastness of space is the externalized vastness of your own being, of being itself. You see it spread out there.

It contains all things. It's the externalized vastness of consciousness itself, and it appears to us as space. Now, space, of course, is nothing, really.

It just enables everything to be, but in itself it is no thing. It is nothing. So, and time equally, the vast stretches of time, inconceivable.

And does time have an end? Does time have a beginning? And here, too, what we perceive as endless vast time is the externalization of the timeless within.

And that gets stretched out when we go into the sense-perceived world. It gets stretched out like... It becomes skimmed milk.

The cream is within you, and then the universe is the skimmed milk. Diluted. So that also can put you in touch with yourself.

Just look into contemplation of space. It doesn't have... It could be the space of the night sky.

It could even be the space of an inner room. If you go into an ancient church or cathedral, it's particularly beautiful to have to be... If you become aware of...

But any room will do it. Become aware of, OK, what's the essence of this room? There's the floor, the ceiling, the walls, the chairs, the furniture in it, the people.

OK, but is there more to it? Yes, of course there's more to it. What really matters about this room is the space.

Without the space, there wouldn't be a room. And there's usually... People would not be aware of the space.

They would be aware only of what's in the space. The furniture, the walls, the people, whatever it is. And so if you can become aware not only of what's in the space and what circumscribes the space, but the space itself, the awareness of space creates in you the awareness of the formless within you.

Because only the moment you become aware of space around you, and I can't tell you how, you just have to do it, because there's nothing to grasp, there's nothing to be aware of. So the mind asks, how can I be aware of space if there's nothing there to be aware of? And that's precisely it.

What is left when you're aware of something where there's nothing? What's left is

awareness itself. That's why being aware of space is such a powerful thing.

Because what you really become aware of then is awareness. Nothing, no content. And so it's a beautiful meditation.

Wherever you go, you can do it. There's even a line in the Tao Te Ching, which speaks of what I can't remember literally, that it says there's a bowl, and the essence of the vessel, or the bowl, is the emptiness inside the space. And so to make it a bowl, there's the two aspects, and these are the two aspects to every life form, form and formless.

Form, and the essence, the formless. And so if you can be aware that that applies to you also, just like the bowl, or like the room, in yourself also there is content, there's furniture inside you, thoughts. Some people have a lot of furniture inside.

The room is just crammed full with furniture, one thought after another. And so, but there must be some space there, because the furniture somehow has to get in there. So if space is there, you just have to know it's there.

There is space inside you already. You don't have to produce it, or achieve it somehow. Just realize it's already there, because otherwise nothing could be there in your mind.

The mind itself, in essence, is space, which is consciousness. So, most people are so seduced by the furniture, so seduced by all these fascinating bits of furniture, or furniture they complain about, they don't want, but it's there, and so that they're never aware of the space around the furniture. Inside themselves, what a limitation, which means all you're stuck with, is your life situation, your limited life situation, which consists of content, content, the content of your life.

And no matter what you do with the content of your life, it's never satisfying. On the level of content alone, you will always come to a point of frustration, because no matter how you rearrange the furniture, I'm using, of course, as you know, furniture as a metaphor for everything in your mind, no matter how you arrange the furniture, or even if you throw some bits out and take other bits in, you always find it's not quite it. You always very quickly come to a point of dissatisfaction, because the transcendent dimension is missing from your life.

And what is the transcendent dimension? The formless space. Not realize that that is the essence of who you actually are.

And so people go through life frustrated, complaining that the world isn't doing what it should be doing to make them happy, not realizing the world cannot make you happy. It's not in its power, because the world is the world of form. It can challenge you so that you go deeper and finally find the formless.

That's what it's there for, really. And, of course, the world is good at that. It always does

that.

And once you know that, then every challenge you can actually welcome. And every loss you can actually, even though you might weep, you can still welcome it, because you can see how precious loss also is. Because what is loss in whatever form?

Loss is some form has been removed from your life and has left behind an empty space. And that happens when somebody close to you dies. Suddenly there's an empty space.

And that is, from the point of view of form, is very painful. And, of course, you will cry, you will weep, because there is the reality of form, but there's also the deeper reality of the formless. And if you can be with both, then in the presence of death, although you may weep, there will be a deep peace that you sense, because the formless shines through the space that's left behind.

And that's the sacred, the divine, God, whatever you want to call it. It shines through. Wherever there's loss, there's grace.

The grace is something has opened up, and that is the essence of the form that passed away also. And that is the indestructible. That is the deathless, as it's in Buddhism.

The closest Buddhism ever gets to talking about God is the deathless realm, Amaravati, the deathless. That's how wonderful to see. And then balance comes into your life, the dance between form and formlessness, the dance between the world and spirit, if you want to call it that.

I don't use it very often. It's too many associations there. There you have it.

And then the beautiful thing is the world is no longer a frustrating place. When you realize that the world was actually meant to be frustrating, it's no longer frustrating, then you recognize whatever challenge comes, you say, oh, okay. Either you resist or you go deeper.

That's always a choice. There's a beautiful line in a book. I believe it's called *The Road Less Traveled*, and it has the best first sentence or first two sentences of any book.

That's why I never read the whole book. It says more or less this. Life is difficult, and when you know that and accept that, it's no longer difficult.

It's so simple. Once you know you don't expect something that the world cannot give you, happiness, fulfillment, peace, and once you realize you don't need the world to give you that because that emanates from the formless dimension within yourself, then, ironically, maybe the universe has a sense of humor or irony, then, ironically, the world and the things of the world are actually quite nice. They're quite satisfying, and you appreciate them.

It's not that you deny. I don't believe that those ancient practices that almost aggressively deny the reality of form are that helpful. I don't think you can find the formless within by fighting or aggressively denying the world of form.

The world of form is also an expression, it's all an expression of the one, and so the world then becomes a place where you can appreciate whatever form is around you, arises, no matter whether it's large or small. Mostly it's small because mostly your life consists of small things. There's a flower, there's the shopping to do, there's go from here to there, get into the car, take one step at a time.

It's all small, really, and you can appreciate the preciousness of all the things in your life, and it's suddenly what before was frustrating now is actually quite pleasant. Why has it become pleasant? You no longer demand from the world, which includes places you go to, which includes people you meet or have relationships with, which includes situations in your life that arise, which includes achievements, successes or failures, whatever.

You don't demand that they should give you what they can't, and you can let them be. You can honor them, but you're not again going to a situation or place and say, I demand that you fulfill me, or go into a relationship and say, I demand that you make me happy, or whatever condition you encounter, some success and expect ultimate fulfillment through it. No, briefly, yes, and then things happen.

So with this comes then the freedom, freedom from, you could call it, freedom from the world. It doesn't mean you disengage from the world, but your attachment to things lessens and then goes. Yes, there is appreciation, there is honoring the beauty of life, the beauty of even the smallest things, yes, but without the attachment, you don't need that anymore, and you can let go when it's time to let go.

This always comes. Wherever you go and whatever you do, at some point it's time to let go. As long as there's attachment, it's a painful thing.

When life says, okay, let go now, no, no, I can't, it's part of who I am, and that's painful, and then life may even tear it out of your hands. It's even more painful, but it could be so simple. You could say, there you go, and then some other form appears.

Oh, that's nice, and you know full well there's nothing that is yours ultimately. The whole thing that you can possess something is, of course, an illusion. For a little while, you look after it, and then you hand it on.

You look after it, pass it on. Let's see what freedom, and then you appreciate the beauty of all things, and you see beauty where before you didn't see beauty, also in the smallest things, and you don't have to take acid for that. But, of course, the truth is everything around you is intensely alive and beautiful.

It's only the judgmental mind that creates the screen, a barrier of conceptualization

between yourself and the aliveness of the world, but the essential aliveness is within in the formless, so don't look for the aliveness in there. Nature can hint at it, it can connect you with your own aliveness. Yes, the essence of all life is within.

The action of the soul or consciousness is oftener in that which is felt and left unsaid than in that which is said in any conversation. It's not in the words, it's in the spaces. It broods over every society and they unconsciously seek for it in each other.

You unconsciously seek the formless in the other. We know better than we do. We do not yet possess ourselves and we know at the same time that we are much more.

I feel the same truth how often in my trivial conversation with my neighbors that somewhat higher in each of us overlooks this by-play and Jove nods to Jove from behind each of us. God nods to God from behind each of us. You engage in superficial conversation, but there's something in the background that far transcends anything in the world of form, which includes words and thoughts.

And if you can sense that in yourself, then you can also sense it in the other. And if you sense that in the other, all relationships become holy relationships, as the Course in Miracles would put it. Then you recognize the holy in every relationship, even if it's a brief one.

And there is something in you that knows and recognizes the truth. We know truth when we see it. Let skeptics and scoffers say what they choose.

Foolish people ask you when you have spoken what they do not wish to hear. How do you know it is truth and not an error of your own? We know truth when we see it, as opposed to opinion, as we know when we are awake that we are awake.

Do you know that you are awake? Yes, you must be. So this is direct realization.

So if you know that you are awake, that means what is it that you really know? You know that you are awake. You can subtract anything that appears in your consciousness at this moment, any form, and you could then be left with just the state of being awake.

And there is the formless. One more sentence. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real being.

Circumstances, situations, world of form, comings, goings, underneath it all, the timeless, formless. Become familiar with the state of not needing to continuously interpret and judge what is happening to you or around you. You don't need that.

You actually become more intelligent when you don't continuously and compulsively interpret what's happening or what's in front of you, what you are perceiving. That's an

old habit going back thousands and thousands of years. And the habit says, no, I have to interpret.

I become stupid if I don't. I won't know what's going on anymore if I can't judge this person that I'm meeting or I can have some kind of opinion or I like or dislike this situation, or this, I want this, I don't want this, this should be happening, that shouldn't. All the stuff that the mind produces continuously that detracts from the simplicity and power of the present moment that the mind puts out, the screen of conceptualization.

And so in living without the compulsive screen the screen of conceptualization is the great liberation. And so you invite into your life the spaces, spaces, the one space really, but spaces of not knowing, not needing to know, not just being present with what is, just giving attention to what is at this moment, which implies, of course, accepting the is-ness of whatever this moment brings, whatever form arises in this moment. Can you say yes to what arises in whatever form?

Because you should say yes because otherwise you suffer, because what is already is. So if you argue internally with what is, you really make the universe into an enemy. I don't want this, but that is right in front of you.

You say, okay, this is what is. You become the space for it. And that's a very quick way of accessing the space consciousness in you by simply bringing an acceptance into the present moment in whatever form it comes.

Where before there was an irritation, where before there was a complaint, where before there was an angry reaction, there's now saying, oh, okay, that's what is. You open your arms and say yes to now. The present moment is my friend.

I've had the enemy. The present moment has been my enemy for long enough. I'm now making friends with the present moment.

Why? Because that's all I have. There's nothing else ever.

Why not make friends with the present moment in whatever form it appears? Yes. And the little secret then, of course, the miracle is if you make friends with the present moment no matter in what form it appears, then the formless opens up within you because you become who you already were, space for it.

You are the space for that. That's all. So the primordial spiritual practice, or if you want a mantra, can I be the space for this?

You can ask yourself the question when situations arise that before you might have complained about, been irritated about, whatever the reaction would have been, can I be the space for this? And usually, or I would say always, you will find yes, I can be this. You just forgot that you can be the space for it.

You forgot that you are the space for whatever arises in your life because you are the now, you are the consciousness in which it arises. So you become who you already are. Can I be the space for this?

With that, it's the end of all irritation or angry reactions or complaining, inner no, don't want this, want something else. Yes, but this is what you have now. And it doesn't mean that you get stuck with what is.

The amazing thing is you move on much more quickly when you bring a yes to the present moment. Then life moves on. You've passed the test.

If you bring no to the present moment, it means you haven't passed. Okay, you get stuck. It's all expressed beautifully in the film Groundhog Day.

You can live in resistance. You can try whatever you will. As long as you are stuck in your negativity, you have to do the lesson again.

You wake up the same day. This protagonist wakes up in the same day every day until finally an inner shift happens and he begins to say yes to the present moment. And then suddenly all the unpleasantness of this day that he has to repeat again and again, all the unpleasantness of that day becomes actually quite pleasant.

He's beginning to help people because he says yes to situations. So he becomes a helpful, beneficial presence in that day and suddenly everybody loves him in that town. And finally he becomes so accepting whereas before he hated where he was and he hated his work.

Many people live like that, hating everything, complaining continuously, nothing and nobody is ever good enough. And then suddenly the shift happens and finally he's in the same place and he says to his girlfriend, oh, let's stay here, it's quite nice. And then suddenly he's free and he's no longer forced to repeat the same day.

Deep spiritual lesson in there. And that's how it is. So it's the egoic mind tells you if you accept what is, you'll be stuck.

This is not the case. Acceptance is the beginning for powerful action if action is required. And non-acceptance, the action that you take on the basis of non-acceptance is never powerful.

It always is tainted with negativity and you could say, I call it karmic action. It produces more unhappiness, more karma. So a very quick way then of accessing the space consciousness within, the formless, is not resisting the form that the present moment takes in your life internally.

Wow, huge shift. When you can try it in this evening, there may be little things

happening on your way home. Wow, non-resistance.

Greatest power there is.

[Speaker 8] (58:51 - 59:45)

Hi. I wondered why you don't, or haven't done a commentary or maybe even a translation of the New Testament. I found the instances where you talk about things that Christ said in your books very enlightening and very different from anything that I had ever thought.

I mean, you put it in terms of increased consciousness and like the kingdom of God is within you and turn the other cheek has quite different meaning the way you explicate. So that's my question. Because the New Testament is so important for so many people and touches so many lives, it seems like if people really knew what it was about, what he was saying, it could have quite an impact.

[Speaker 1] (59:46 - 1:06:09)

Okay. So you want me to write a book? Another one?

I'm in your spare time. Thank you. It's funny you should say that.

It's been kind of in the background, for a few years in the background, the idea that perhaps one day there will be a book about that. If I write another book, I don't know if that will happen. I mean, I don't write it.

It kind of comes, but it may well be that. There's a lot of beautiful truth in there, which is, of course, obscured by misunderstanding and distortion and manipulation, many people. But there's an essence there that is very valuable.

And also there's a deepening that is needed if Christianity is to survive. A deepening is needed. And, of course, there have been many books that were written to demythologize Christianity or Jesus.

And yes, on the one hand, it needs demythologizing, but demythologizing can also have disastrous results when people impose their own limitations on what they read. And they don't see the ultimate value that's in it. So there are books about Jesus as a political revolutionary.

There are books about Jesus as a social reformer. There are books about Jesus as a man who has a simple message, just be good to each other. But, of course, this is true, but it goes much deeper.

So demythologizing, if I write another book or if it gets written through me, would be part of it, but the sacred will not be lost. That is the essence. Because even within a

mythology, there's a sacred essence.

Within the story, which otherwise many people, until recently and even now, there are many who are at a state of consciousness where the actual truth needs to be embedded in a story. And then they can get a little bit through the story. But there are many these days, however, who don't need the stories anymore.

You can show them the truth. And that's perhaps what Jesus meant when he said all the things that I do and greater things you will also do. But the time has to be right.

So why didn't he do the greater things? Because he knew they were not ready for that. He had to teach through the stories.

And his entire life became part of a mythology and a myth which also has a powerful truth in it, hidden. That truth must be preserved, but it must be shown, extricated from the story, without even destroying the story so that the people who still need the story can have it. That's the balance that needs to be done very gently.

And then there's the deepening there. And then it can survive. If it has to, we don't know, another 2,000 years.

Nothing that is in form survives forever. It may well be that it becomes, it will transform completely into something else. Sometimes as part of our gatherings for Internet TV, E-T-TV we call it, E-T-TV, I've discussed some books.

Occasionally I discuss a book with a group. We've discussed the Tao Te Ching. We've discussed the Meditations by Marcus Aurelius.

We've discussed... Emerson. Emerson, thank you, yes.

And two of those books are very old. My Meditations is 2,000 years old. The Tao Te Ching is 2,500, 600 years old.

And they're still alive. So those things... But there's some good modern translations now, so that helps.

But this would mean, if it's... I hope it won't be necessary, but we are studying, we are reading the Tao Te Ching, which was written 2,600 years ago. That would mean, if it's still needed, in the year 4,000, 4,600, people could be reading The Power of Now.

I hope not. I hope it will be completely forgotten, because it will be so obvious that they don't need the book anymore, long before that. Maybe in a museum they'll still have it.

And they'll look at it, and people will say, look, they had to talk about these things because people had no idea about this. Somebody had to write a book about the most obvious things. That's how misguided they were.

But probably not even that, because they may not be interested in the past at all. Who knows? Who knows?

Well, thank you for your encouragement.

[Speaker 17] (1:06:33 - 1:06:33)

Okay.

[Speaker 5] (1:06:35 - 1:06:51)

Actually, my question is already being answered. That often happens. And I think one day we're all going to come here, and once we're all in presence, we won't have any questions for you.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:51 - 1:06:53)

That's true. That would be wonderful.

[Speaker 5] (1:06:53 - 1:06:56)

You're going to be out of business. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:58 - 1:07:00)

Yes. That would be wonderful.

[Speaker 5] (1:07:00 - 1:07:08)

Actually, my question was, could you elaborate on ego versus healthy self-esteem?

[Speaker 1] (1:07:09 - 1:17:13)

Ah, yes. Eventually, what we call healthy self-esteem, which is a wonderful thing, eventually that is not enough. And as a human being evolves, that healthy self-esteem is no longer satisfying as you grow older and is transcended.

And what takes its place is healthy, no hyphen self-esteem. The self-esteem, of course, means that you are reasonably satisfied with who you are as a person and the achievements of the person, what the person can do, or what the person knows, or what the person possesses. And you compare what the person can do, abilities, what the person knows, knowledge, or what the person has in terms of possessions.

You compare that with others, and you come out favorably. So either you can do more than somebody else or others, feel better about yourself. I can do this, but they can't.

I can, but you can't. Or you have more knowledge. Did you know that this and such and such is such and such a case?

You didn't know that? Well, let me tell you. That feels good.

These ignorant people, they don't know anything. Or you have more. How many bedrooms does your house have?

Four? Four? Well, we have 11.

Do you have an advanced degree? No? I have two PhDs.

And that's fine. It starts with a child already. It says, look what I can do.

I can jump further than you. And for the child, it's fine. There's no point in telling a child, don't do that.

Your ego is arising. No, the child has to go through that. And it is better to have healthy self-esteem, as you describe it, as it's usually described, than extremely low self-esteem.

I'm no good. Everybody's better than me. I have nothing.

Life has treated me unfairly. There's a self-image there also, as there is a self-image in healthy self-esteem. One, of course, is much nicer than the other.

It's more pleasant to live with healthy self-esteem than with a low self-esteem, or unhealthy self-esteem, one could call it. But they're both identification with some kind of form. And you compare the form of who I am with the form of others.

And you are better, at least in one area, you must be. And that's satisfying. But there's still, you're trapped in form, and you're depending on, for your sense of value or worthiness, you're depending on, ultimately, to put it bluntly, others who have less or know less or can do less than you.

And that's fine. Doesn't mean you shouldn't strive to do great things or to have things or to know things. But the question is, ultimately, is that a satisfying basis for your sense of who you are?

And in the long term, it is not. It is not satisfying. That is why people who are maybe very happy with what they possess, after a while, there's an emptiness that comes, not the spiritual emptiness, the sense of emptiness of what's it all about.

And even things you can do, a time may come when you can't do it anymore. Whatever it is that you do that's so great, playing an instrument, the great pianist, wonderful, why not be a great pianist? But if you derive your sense of who you are from that, then one day you find arthritis in your fingers.

And who are you now? Or the agility goes. It's not there anymore.

Oh, my God. Suffering comes. Or you invent the greatest new computer, some

computer.

I don't know the expressions, but program or whatever it is. And everybody says this is the greatest ever. But three years later or two years, these things happen very quickly.

Somebody else comes and makes yours obsolete. And then you have no new ideas, and there you sit completely devastated because you got from somebody great, you've become nobody. But it was all illusion because you derived your sense of who you are from something in the world of form which is fleeting, not reliable, not solid, dreamlike.

And so the true self-esteem comes from not identifying with form. Now, whether we even want to call that self-esteem, I don't know. The true sense of worthiness and of power, true power, comes when you realize the formless in yourself, that dimension, and that all power comes from that.

But it goes far beyond the person that you are. And then you are rooted in the formless, so to speak, or you are it. And that there's enormous sense of worthiness in there, but it's not comparative.

It's not more than. You see the same worthiness in everyone, even if they don't know it for themselves yet. So there's power, but not more than.

There's just the power of life itself. And you know everybody is an expression of that, although they may not know it yet. Everybody.

So this is, you transcend conventional self-esteem. And it doesn't mean you lose your sense of worth. It shifts into something much deeper.

So every human really is, there may even be some children these days who don't need to go through the egoic state anymore. That is possible. But traditionally, and humans had to go, and some, many probably still have to go, through the stage where they identify with form, develop some self-esteem, do something that you feel good about.

You can do it. And then comes the time going beyond. Except perhaps, as I said, some advanced souls who may be coming into this world or already in this world as children who don't need, even need to identify with that anymore.

A question that comes from there also is, if a person has low self-esteem, in other words a mental image of not good enough, then does that person have to go through the stage of healthy self-esteem before they can transcend it altogether? I don't know. I haven't tried it enough with enough people.

It may well be that the unhealthy self-esteem, if it leads to a state of suffering, great suffering, you may be able to, with the help of a teacher, go from there to no self. Because the way from unhappiness or suffering to transcendence is easier than the way

from superficial happiness to transcendence. Superficial happiness keeps you in the dream world for quite a while.

It's not that bad. I can't complain. It's not that bad.

It's going okay. I'm quite happy. Just got a promotion.

I'm so happy I just got my annual bonus from my Wall Street bank.

[Speaker 16] (1:17:15 - 1:17:17)

Great. I'm doing great.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:30 - 1:17:51)

So from there, the transcendence is not directly from Wall Street. Probably not. But if you go from Wall Street to prison, much easier.

[Speaker 5] (1:18:13 - 1:19:49)

About 30 years ago, I was in extreme pain and my body began to move in these automatic patterns, my full body. Intense urging filled with presence and it released my suffering. And the patterns were individualized and evolved.

And for a 20-year period, there were others that experienced these automatic movements and their suffering was released. But now, it's been 10 years and the movements are quiet. They're still.

Well, not exactly still. I'm not experiencing the urging into these movements. I'm not experiencing the same ecstasy and presence.

And so I feel lost. It isn't just the loss of the movements or evidence of manifestation of presence. It's the loss of the presence and the feeling of ecstasy.

So I wait. I'm not sure what I'm waiting for, but I am suffering and I don't know what to do.

[Speaker 2] (1:20:04 - 1:20:15)

Is suffering in the body or more psychological from your attachment to...? Not in the body. Not in the body. So it's more psychological.

[Speaker 5] (1:20:15 - 1:20:20)

Yes, it's the loss of presence as I knew it.

[Speaker 2] (1:20:21 - 1:21:25)

As you knew it. So you somehow identified with that form. So whenever you were in movement, in this spontaneous movement that would occur, that would bring about ecstasy for you, peace, presence, your attachment to the form, the way that presence came through you, is causing the suffering right now.

So in this moment, that spontaneous movement is gone and it's your non-acceptance to that which is bringing about the suffering. Presence, although it came through you for that length of time, 20 years, in form, presence has no form. So whether you're sitting or whether you're moving, there is presence.

[Speaker 5] (1:21:30 - 1:21:34)

I'm not feeling it as intensely.

[Speaker 2] (1:21:35 - 1:22:57)

Oh, so you want it to be the same as yesterday. Yes, actually. And it can never be the same as yesterday.

Perhaps there's another so-called plan for you, this emerging of consciousness. I too have had spontaneous movement. When I would sit in meditation, and I did this for years, sitting in meditation, still meditation, then suddenly I found myself moving, and it was so beautiful.

It was almost like this beautiful Tai Chi art form, and I'm just moving in bliss, and oh, like I can just really get into it and just roll, feel this. I love it. And then when it would stop, it'd be almost like a sitting meditation, how some of us will do practice sitting meditation 20 minutes a day.

We're in peace. We get up off our cushion and then lose consciousness totally throughout the day. So it's not about just moving in form.

It's connecting to this presence, this stillness. It's like life now saying to you, connect to me regardless of what form this moment is taking.

[Speaker 5] (1:23:00 - 1:23:34)

There was kind of a hidden comment in there in that when I had extreme pain, I had the movement, and now I don't have extreme pain, and I don't have the movement. When you had the movement, you had no extreme pain? Well, it would release the pain, and it would release the suffering, but what I'm saying now is my physical body is not in pain.

It's not in pain. And I thought that I needed pain to have the movement. You want the pain back?

[Speaker 16] (1:23:35 - 1:23:36)

Am I hearing that?

[Speaker 5] (1:23:36 - 1:23:49)

I didn't want the pain back, but when I had that level of pain, the movement just came so automatically, and now I don't have that level of pain, and the movement's not coming.

[Speaker 2] (1:23:50 - 1:23:57)

So the only problem is that the movements aren't coming? Or you want the pain back so you can get the movements coming?

[Speaker 5] (1:23:57 - 1:24:04)

That's been a temptation, but no, not actually. I long for the intensity.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:05 - 1:25:10)

Yeah, and that longing for the intensity is your obstacle. Yeah. Yeah.

You can never get something back from the past. Apparently. God has a much greater plan.

You want something back, so you're not accepting the present moment. Yeah. So you stay with the present moment.

Just space. What is right now?

[Speaker 5] (1:25:30 - 1:25:40)

Well, I'm calmer. I'm not sure what occurred, but I'm calmer.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:48 - 1:27:08)

By allowing this moment to be as it is, you release that contraction, the resistance to the present moment, to whatever it is that you feel. You don't even have to name it. In fact, naming it is just totally secondary.

It's just by giving yourself the space to be, no matter what form it takes, something shifts, an opening happens. So that very thought of wanting something back from yesterday kept you contracted from feeling presence now, and it can only be felt now. Do you do any form of movement?

That you go to yoga or tai chi, qigong, or whatever? Yes. And you access presence?

Yes. When you do that?

[Speaker 5] (1:27:10 - 1:27:24)

And then I compare. And so I've really done a great job at tormenting myself. Yeah.

It's that identification with thought, the mind coming in.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:24 - 1:28:01)

And that's the mind's job. It's not about getting rid of that either, because that's what the mind will do, is compare, will judge, will analyze, will conceptualize, interprets. And that's all happening on the periphery, on the outer layer, our cloaks, so to speak, the veil.

Our only job here is to go beneath the veil, allow the veil to be as it is, and you access that dimension that is presence, called presence, underneath the veil.

[Speaker 5] (1:28:02 - 1:28:15)

Well, I do feel something arising within me now, and I thank you. You're welcome.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:42 - 1:29:28)

We really are each other. Thank you for bringing that up. We are here to recognize ourselves in the other.

We are here to help the other access that dimension in themselves, of who they are. That's it.

[Speaker 17] (1:29:30 - 1:29:32)

I don't think it gets any better than that.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:48 - 1:33:34)

I couldn't explain it, and I don't think Eckhart could have explained it, but it was almost, it felt like for me, this magnetic pull, just to come together. So I followed that pull without thinking about it, and having to take it day by day. And I saw, as I mentioned when I started seeing the expectations I had, how the mind can want to try to pull away from that, somehow, let's call it an energetic pull, a pull that's beyond thought.

Because he didn't fit in with my image, but yet I couldn't deny this pull. So every time I sat still, there were many times in our relationship where I thought, I want out. It's not right for me.

These are the thoughts that was going on. It's just... Because I had these expectations that he wasn't fulfilling.

But yet every time I sat in meditation and I said, Do I want out now? And the answer was always no. What is it that I want now?

And that pull is still there. It hasn't gone away, it hasn't subsided. Will it go away?

I don't know. Will I be pulled somewhere else? I don't know.

But it doesn't matter because I'm not even going there. I just stay in this moment with this... The only word I can come up with is pull.

This pull just to stay here, be here. So it may not have that big romantic story behind it, but to me, that was. The romance is with this stillness and the form that came and arise, that's here, that I had the pull towards, is beautiful, is love.

And all the stuff on the human level, well, yeah, that needs to be worked out. And it does, it works itself out. And it's amazing how much it works itself up.

The more that you're rooted in stillness, it's like, oh, okay, because things begin to fall away. You know, the expectations fall away and other perhaps, you know, the ideas about what a relationship should be like fall away. And here you are, you're just here.

So that's how we came together. I followed. And you can call a pull an impulse, the energy.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:49 - 2:28:11)

Let's talk about meditation today and whatever else arises out of that. You never know beforehand. Meditation, as you may know, I don't teach meditation as such, not so much as a separate practice.

Presence practice, bringing presence into everyday life, is meditation. But there's also something to be said for having a structured practice every day. And it may not be right or absolutely necessary for everybody, but many people will find structured meditation every day helpful.

The thing is, I've come across many meditators who are extremely accomplished, have been practicing meditation, structured meditation for 20 or 30 years, and still they find that no matter what states of consciousness they achieve or enter into in their structured meditation, there's still a huge gap between their everyday life and their state of consciousness while they meditate. In other words, they tend to be almost as unconscious as a non-meditator in everyday life. So there's a gap that can arise in people who practice structured meditation between, this is my meditation, and then you get on with the rest of your life.

Meditation in the morning, in the evening, and then they move out of their meditation into the rest of their lives. To exemplify that, there's the example of the meditator, the man who is meditating on metta, a Buddhist meditation called loving-kindness, where you spread loving-kindness out from you. It goes something like, may I be well and

happy, may I be well and happy, may I be well and happy, and as the words are used as pointers so that you emanate peace, you can feel yourself, and then you include the next circle, may everybody in this house be well and happy, may everybody in this city be well and happy.

Gradually you expand. May everybody in this state be well and happy, in this country, the entire planet. So it's quite a beautiful meditation.

Anyway, this man then was practicing the metta, loving-kindness meditation, and then the door opened and his daughter came running in, and so he opened it. I said, can't you see I'm doing my meditation? Get out of here.

Every day you disturb me while I'm doing it. I chose a gap between the practice and living. So if you are a meditator, or if you take up meditation, beware of that, and very important, meditation must not be confined to just one time period when you sit down, when you sit wherever you sit, on the floor, on a chair, on a cushion, and close your eyes.

Meditation needs to seep into everyday life, and this is what we call, of course, this is what we always address here, what the teaching is all about, that's the presence practice. And sometimes I recommend little, what I call mini-meditations, and this is really a presence practice that you can do wherever you are and in any situation. So I recommend, for example, every time you get into your car, when you close the door, not to immediately reach for the ignition, but to sit for at least about 30 seconds.

Don't do too much, not necessary. 30 seconds, and be present during those 30 seconds. You can choose either to have your attention on sense perceptions, visual, auditory, give it your complete attention, or you can have your attention on the fact that you are breathing, or you can have your attention on the feeling of the inner body as you sit there, the aliveness in the body.

30 seconds. Unless there's an emergency, you need to get to the hospital, your wife is pregnant, then don't do it. Or there's an extreme emergency.

Now, many people live their everyday life as if their entire life were an emergency. It's not the case. That's a deep-seated form of conditioning.

In other words, they live in continuous stress, and that's really treating everyday life as a continuous emergency. Imagine living like that. And don't imagine it.

Many people do. Living is amazing. So what does that mean?

A continuous emergency means there's a continuous, enormously powerful pull that pulls you out of yourself and out of the now into some kind of pursuit of future. That's the emergency, because the emergency means I need to get there. There are some real

emergencies.

As I said, you may have to get to the hospital or you may have to... whatever it is. But mostly, it's not a real emergency.

It's a form of conditioning. The entire civilization is conditioned and conditions you in that way. It starts at school.

It starts the way people live at home and their family. There's always stress, always something to do. I don't personally have much experience anymore with visiting families like that because most people, if I visit people, they're already present, already living in presence.

So I don't have that much contact anymore with the normal dysfunctional families. But I know that many of them still exist, the majority. And I sometimes see it in films when you see very quite realistic films where you see a family interacting.

God, they're all insane. Let's do this. Have you done this?

Come on, let's do that. What's the next thing we have to do? This continuous stream of things arising in your mind, one mind object after another, content completely absorbed in the content of your mind, that's ultimately what it is.

And so never finding any kind of space in your life. And really that's what meditation is all about, finding that most precious of things, or no things, space. Without space, your life is, as I sometimes called Winston Churchill when he talked about human history, one damn thing after another.

And that's how many people experience their life. Just one, what's the next damn thing I have to do? And then you have a succession of damn things that you haven't done yet.

They're just waiting. And they're saying, give me attention, give me attention. And so you're torn.

It's a normal way to live these days. And even professions that used to be cushy and comfortable, like being a teacher, have become extremely stressful. And places that potentially could be and certainly should be places of healing, like hospitals, many of them are madhouses.

And sometimes the only grace that is still there is the nurses and a few doctors who are not completely lost, and they bring some presence into that situation. But very often the entire, everybody else is on the verge of a nervous breakdown continuously. There are even TV soap operas about life in a hospital.

It doesn't have to be like that. So this is a deep-seated form of conditioning and the absence, the lack of space. And really that is, another word for space, we could say

being, the sense of being, the formless and timeless sense of being or aliveness, spaciousness.

If that's lacking in your life, really nothing much is going to help you, no matter what you achieve, because the most precious thing is not there. The beingness, the connectedness with being, one could put it like that. Some sense of inner spaciousness.

That's where peace emanates, inner peace can only emanate from there. There is no peace to be found in any of the objects, that objects of consciousness. Sometimes the object deceives you and says, if I can only obtain this object of my desire, then I will achieve inner peace.

Of course, then if you are lucky or unlucky enough to obtain it, then quickly you realize that it didn't do its job, it didn't do it for me. I thought fame would make me happy and complete it, and once fame comes, it comes to a few, to some it comes for a little while, famous for a day, or you may be famous for a couple of years, or you may be famous for the rest of your life, but I've met a few famous people and unless they have gone beyond identification with that, they are as unhappy or more unhappy than non-famous people. You very quickly see the downside of fame, big downsides, one of them being that newspapers invent stories about you.

That's not true. I never did that. I never said that.

Why are they writing this about me? Because they want to sell more papers. So you're being used by many people who are just too short.

So meditation then really is about, you could say, finding inner space, discovering inner space. I wouldn't say quite creating inner space because although I might have said it once or twice, it's not, words are always never quite right. You don't have to create inner space because inner space is your essential identity, the spaciousness of consciousness itself.

So in that sense, you don't need to create it, produce it, achieve it, and here we come already to the pitfall that many meditators succumb to or fall into, whatever, is that unconsciously they make their meditation into something to be achieved, a means to an end, and then you try to get better in your meditation practice. That sounds a good thing. Sounds like a good thing to do, to get better in my meditation practice, but what is being obscured by trying to get somewhere in your meditation, what's being obscured is the space that can only be accessed in the now.

So for many people it happens unconsciously that meditation, which could be a great thing, if it's not done rightly, it's just another way of attempting to get to some future achievement through your meditation. And of course you can achieve quite a few things. You can achieve a relatively still mind, but it won't be the real thing.

There'll be some kind of willpower behind it. It's not the discovery of inner space. You're holding, maybe you're holding the lid on the kettle.

You can sometimes look at a person, if you go to a place where there's people, group meditations, and you can sometimes see that in quite a few people there's a lot of strain and holding back while they meditate. Some people, sometimes in eastern places in Buddhist monasteries there are some Westerners and some Eastern people, and sometimes the Eastern monks are very impressed by the Westerners, some of the Westerners, because they can sit still. They have so much willpower.

They sit there. And of course they're showing everybody how great they are in their meditation. And of course that's not, you can see when there's a lot of wanting there, a lot of force behind it, and that's not it.

There's no discovery of inner space there. But potentially meditation could be used as a way of discovering space, inner space, finding it, connecting with it, and realizing that essentially you are it. Meditation then is usually connected, is always connected with your attention, directing attention is the beginning and essential part of every meditation is where is your attention.

Now for most people their attention is continuously absorbed by thought activity, very habitual. For many people that is so overpowering that they wouldn't even be interested in meditation. They may not even have heard of it.

It's not part of their reality. They are so absorbed in the continuously arising streams of thought that beyond that nothing exists for them and they are not looking for anything because apart from the continuously arising thoughts they don't know there's anything else. They are so identified with that that apart from the thoughts there is nobody there.

At least they don't know that there is a deeper dimension. It is obscured, completely obscured. So those people are then, we can say they are trapped in their ego because the meaning of ego is complete identification with the stream of thinking whereby the stream of thinking becomes invested with a sense of self.

And because you are identified with every thought that arises and that sense of self is the ego, the false self, normal human condition. So an orphanage is only when the living in that way creates more and more unhappiness that at some point the unhappiness or the stress either makes you ill or in itself is enough to create so much tension that something happens and that is the good side of suffering or unhappiness. At some point there's a slight awakening and there's a little crack in the egoic density, the shell of the ego.

And that's the wonderful thing about the ego is that it has built into itself a self-destruct mechanism. Sooner or later the ego, because of the unhappiness it generates, the stress

and the suffering, sooner or later something cracks either directly or something in the body cracks in the physical and then that creates an opening. And then perhaps if something cracks then the person suddenly becomes interested in, ah, there may be more.

And then you might want to explore meditation or you're drawn to a spiritual teaching. And then you become aware for the first time of where your attention is. And then you become aware for the first time of the kinds of thoughts you think habitually.

It's not so much that you think the thoughts, it's the thoughts that inhabit your mind. You don't think them because they're just there, they arise. You don't think your thoughts, the thoughts, in the same way that you don't beat your heart.

And so some of your attention then, a little bit of your attention detaches from thinking and is there, and there's a little bit of a witness there that realizes what's going on in your mind. That's wonderful. And then the desire may come, well, okay, that wants to grow.

And then you might take up a meditation practice. And then you learn about your attention. Then you learn how enormously powerful the pull of your mind is that of continuously wanting more attention for thoughts.

And then you take up some meditation and the first thing you learn in meditation, in any meditation, is to direct your attention to some meditation object. So you learn to direct attention away from thinking onto some object. The object may be an external object, a flower.

It may be a candle flame. It could be anything. It could be a picture.

It could be directing your attention to a word that is repeated in your mind or a group of words, a so-called mantra. And then you repeat that in your mind. And instead of going into all kinds of thought activity, thought activity is reduced then to just a few words or one word.

And a mantra is a traditional Eastern thing and can be helpful for many people. You can create your own mantra too. You can say whatever.

God is. Even if you don't believe in God, you can say, God is. You can say, I am.

You can ask the question, Who am I? It's a wonderful meditation, very simple, favored by the Indian teacher Ramana Maharshi. He recommended it highly.

And if you don't want any kind of complicated meditation, I suggest you use that so your attention is directed to the words, Who am I? But you repeat every 20 seconds, 30 seconds, whatever feels comfortable in your mind, silently. So the focus of your attention

is, rather than going into all kinds of thinking, is reduced to those words.

And the wonderful thing about this meditation, in a way one can say the more simple a meditation, the better. And this one is very simple. The wonderful thing about this meditation is you have your attention on the words.

But after you've said those words, those words are a question. Now usually a question demands an answer. And your mind might think that at some point some answer will come into your mind that will tell you who you are.

And it may even happen after you've done it for 10, 15, 20 minutes, suddenly your mind might say something. But whatever it says, that won't be quite it. Even if your mind says, well, your mind might say all kinds of things.

It might suddenly say you are a miserable wretch who has failed at everything you've done. Or your mind might suddenly say you are the greatest being that has ever come to this planet. You are here to redeem the world.

You are very special. It's happened to some, even to some people who've gone very deep. Suddenly this thought came.

And they completely believed in that thought. I am the greatest. And then they announced it to the world and started to write books.

And then not only they believed in that thought, some other people started to believe in that too. And then you have a cult. So that may come in.

Or you may have something much more subtle and perhaps closer to who you are. It might say you are timeless and unlimited consciousness itself. Well, that's better.

You can't really identify with that so much. And yet that's not quite it either because it's just another thought, just more concepts to believe in. A little bit better, I would say, than saying I am the greatest that has ever lived, but still a conceptual structure that then you believe in and identify with.

So you have to be careful with this meditation Who am I? Because no matter what your mind says in answer to the question will not be quite it. So why then ask the question Who am I?

Because what matters with this meditation is the silent space after the question. And the answer to who you are lies in the silent space after you have asked the question. And the only reason why you should then repeat the same question is to prevent all kinds of other thoughts from arising because the silent space may only have a limited lifespan from our external viewpoint.

It may be there for a few seconds and then some thought may come and say, Have I

answered my e-mails today? And so to prevent that kind of thought from arising you just ask the question again. We need to know that because otherwise the mind, after you have practiced this meditation for a while, will become frustrated and say, Well, I've been doing this meditation that Eckhart talked about and that Ramana Maharshi recommended and I haven't gotten anywhere with it.

I still don't know who I am. I haven't had an answer. That's because you haven't paid attention to the space after the question.

So this is a wonderful meditation once you know what to be aware of and be careful not to fall into some kind of error or belief. Who am I? A beautiful, gentle question that directs your attention to that which cannot be named, that which cannot be understood through concepts, that which has no time to it.

It can very quickly put you in touch with yourself, so to speak. The mind then, mind activity subsides and there's just a beautiful space of beingness or presence. Who am I?

Ah, who am I? Space. And how often you need to ask the question as the space remains, then there's no need to repeat the question.

Be with the space for perhaps a minute. It's fine. And then just to make sure that perhaps the question you find is arising again.

Who am I? Wonderful meditation. You can also do it.

Sometimes people do it to each other. You can sit with your partner and look into his or her eyes and ask, Who are you? And don't, answers are not required, by the way.

Who are you? Who are you? Sometimes there are such things.

I've heard about it. I haven't experienced it. Meditation.

No, enlightenment intensives, I believe. I don't know if anybody has had that experience of a group. And as far as I know, I've been told people often spend hours asking this question.

And sometimes after two or three or four or five or six hours of being asked, Who are you? Apparently some people have a realization. Now whether if it's produced in such a way, whether it's a lasting realization, I don't know.

Somebody is shaking his head no, so that's the answer. So that's not needed. Don't overdo anything.

That's again a pitfall of, because people think if meditation is good, more of it must be even better and more of it must be better still. And then people become obsessed with meditation. And I've seen some people even going, becoming mentally very unbalanced

after a while because they thought, Okay, I'm going to get there and I'm going to get there.

Where? You're there already. I will get there.

And then suddenly after doing eight, nine, ten hours of meditation every day for several weeks, they had to be taken away. So moderation, no need to overdo it. There's nowhere to get.

You think there's somewhere to get? No, there isn't. That's the very thing of meditation is that it opens up for you the depths of the present moment.

If you're going anywhere in your meditation, where you're going is more deeply into the now. That sounds very strange because when we talk about now, the timeless dimension, we're using words. All words originate in the world without the dimension of time.

So even to say, although I would say it's a true statement, but it's a paradoxical statement to say we are going more deeply into the now. More implies there's time. So there's always a paradox when you talk about the now using words and using words that originate in this dimension of time.

But that's how it is. So let's become comfortable with the paradox and say that meditation is about the deepening into the vertical dimension so that you are no longer lost in the horizontal dimension of life, past and future, one thought after another, one thing to do after another. And looking for yourself in the horizontal dimension where there is no, as the Buddha already said, there is no self there.

The self that you're looking for cannot be found. Anatta, I believe, in Pali. Anatta, no self, Buddha said, enormous insight 2,600 years ago, no matter where you go and what you do and what condition you enter into you will find it's not self.

And if you're looking for yourself where there is no self, you encounter dukkha, which means suffering. Wonderful. And suffering in whatever form, unhappiness, unsatisfactoriness, discontent, irritation, whatever, all forms of suffering.

So if you don't realize that there is no self in anything that you can identify with in the world of mind objects, whatever it is, possessions, relationships, places, people, situations, achievements, successes, failures, they're all no self. There's no self in them. They're just conditions that arise, come and go, come and go.

And that's the third part of the teaching of the Buddha. It's any mind object in any condition that arises is impermanent, impermanent. In the Pali language, anicca, I believe, fleeting.

So if you're looking for yourself in what is fleeting and what is impermanent, where there is no self, then you suffer. So the whole teaching is about, the Buddhist teaching, any spiritual teaching, is about the kingdom of heaven in the vertical dimension of now. So the meditation, if it works, takes you into the vertical dimension of now, and that is what this meditation does when you ask, Who am I?

Just what remains is there's no mind object, there's only this. Everything else falls away. Beautiful meditation.

Another meditation object, that is a very simple one. Again, the meditation object means that to which attention is directed is your breathing, and that's a very ancient meditation. Breathing is quite a nice meditation object because it does not have a clearly defined form.

It's a very subtle thing, and it's always there. It's always there. Mostly you're not aware of it, but you're always breathing, or breathing is always happening in your body, and so taking your attention to the fact that you are breathing is another very simple meditation that anybody can practice for ten minutes, fifteen minutes a day if you want to make it into a structured meditation, or you can take one conscious breath occasionally, which is already a mini meditation. What does that mean, one conscious breath?

It means you're aware of the air moving into your nose and into your body. Now there, people have developed various ways of being aware of that. The most basic form of this kind of breath awareness, which is designed for people who have an extremely noisy mind, and to ask them to be aware of their breath more than half a breath is too much to ask.

They can do half a breath, the in-breath, but by the time they breathe out, they're thinking about something else. So there are many people whose mind is so active, and perhaps even half a breath they can't do. And for those people, they have devised, well, they, I mean, these are some forms of meditation that are used in Buddhism, although they have nothing to do with Buddhism as such.

Anybody could use them. And there you start by counting your breaths. So if your mind is over, absolutely overactive, then you just go, as you breathe in, you count from one to nine, one, two, three, four, in your mind, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, a little pause, and as you breathe out, you count from nine to one, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one.

Now, of course, you're not free of thought there. You haven't found inner space yet, but this is for people who are burdened with an extremely noisy mind, and they should be doing that, they say, for perhaps a few months at least. And gradually you can reduce the number of counts, one to six, then you do one to three, and then if you're lucky, you can just do one or two, and that's called the counting.

It's part of a practice that is called in Buddhism I believe, Samatha, calm, to calm your mind. The next stage then, once you can do the counting, now many of you won't need that because your mind is not that active, otherwise you wouldn't be here listening to this. You would be off thinking about something else.

The next step, and this is perhaps for many of you might be helpful, is to follow, it's called the following, you follow the breath with your attention as it moves into the body. You can actually feel the air moving into the body, and then you follow it with your attention as it moves out of the body. That's quite a pleasant thing to do.

Let's just do it for a few breaths, with eyes closed, or eyes open. Eyes closed is probably easier. I'll keep my eyes open as I speak, but I'll also do it.

In breath, follow your attention, follow the breath, and out breath. In breath, and out breath. In breath, and out breath.

In breath, out breath. Quite pleasant. You have a meditation object that's very close to you, and that leads us even to a more subtle thing, that is to feel the air at the tip of your nose, where the air comes in.

It's a very subtle feeling. It's called the touching. So now you feel the air as it touches your nose on its way into the body.

Now to feel that, you need more acute attention. You can practice with that. So you will notice that the attention needs to be more acute so that you can catch that very subtle feeling where the air moves into the nostrils.

And then comes something that they don't even teach in all schools. The most important part in any meditation is to drop the meditation object. So once you can feel the subtleness of the air entering your nostrils, at that point, when you are good at it, drop it.

Finished. That's the end of the meditation because what remains then is attention itself, bare attention itself. And that's the space, consciousness itself.

So no matter what meditation object you use, one tends to get attached. If meditation, you become peaceful as you meditate. One tends to become attached to the meditation object.

And then that again is a pitfall in meditation because eventually every meditation object is to be relinquished so that what remains is the formless consciousness itself. That's the beauty of it. And that's the only reason why you have a meditation object.

The only thing is that many people find it hard to go directly from normal, mind-identified consciousness into the realization of consciousness itself. But that can be done. You can, as you sit here, often I invite you to realize that in yourself without

necessarily going through a meditation.

So the opportunity is there at any moment to realize that in you that underlies all thought, that underlies all mind activity. So at any moment the possibility is there that you realize who you are beyond thought. And thought can subside suddenly.

It can happen spontaneously. And really the entire spiritual teaching is aimed at this simple realization of who you are underneath all the mind objects, underneath all the clutter of the mind, plus the emotions that go with the mind activity. So the ultimate, the aim of meditation is to find that clarity, that peace in that space.

But some people find it even without the meditation. Some people find it because life has become unbearably painful and suddenly they step out of that which created all the pain, identification with form. And then the closest in this teaching that we get to meditation is inner body.

And that's another beautiful thing. You can either... I usually recommend inner body awareness in everyday life, when you listen to somebody, when you're looking at something, especially nature, connect with the aliveness within and then look at the tree so that you're not putting abstraction onto the aliveness of that being that we call tree, that beautiful, mysterious...

Everything is mysterious. And the mind believes that once you have put a label on something, you know it. But you can see that it's a pseudo-knowing.

It's fine as a practical thing in everyday life. But to call a tree a tree or that's an oak tree or that's such and... There are many different kinds of oak trees.

So now, no, it's not just an oak tree. That is such and such an oak tree. Oh, okay.

Now I know what it is. Finished. I'm finished with that.

What's the next thing I can label? So you haven't actually connected with a tree. You haven't contacted the essential reality of that thing that the mind calls tree, the depth of it, the mystery of it, because you believe that once you call something by a name, then you know what it is.

It's not. It's just an attachment of a concept onto something that is profound. And you do it to yourself.

You attach concepts and labels to who you think you are. And then that becomes, then you miss the profundity of your very being. So then you're trapped again.

That's the horizontal dimension of thought. So we need to break through that, not believing in the thoughts that arise, especially thoughts that concern you or other people. Who am I?

Well, then you refer to your personal history or the way in which you interpret your life. Nothing to do, essentially, with who you are. Not believing in labels.

And so, feeling the inner body can be done as a structured meditation or can be practiced in everyday life as a way of anchoring yourself in the now, as a way of keeping the conceptualizing mind out of the way and relating more deeply to people and things, whatever it is you perceive, the life around you. The inner body, when it's done as a structured meditation, is quite an old meditation, been around for hundreds or perhaps thousands of years. The practitioners of this meditation believe that that was one of the meditations originally taught by the Buddha and they have some scriptures to prove it.

Of course, nobody knows what the Buddha actually said. Many of the scriptures were written much, much later. But that doesn't matter.

It is a powerful meditation. They call it vipassana and it's a very structured meditation where you gradually, your attention gradually goes from one part of the body to the other. You can do it as a, learn it as a practice if you want.

The way I recommend inner body is less structured or hardly structured. I might say, feel the aliveness in your hands as you sit here and then feel the aliveness in your feet at the same time. Feel the aliveness means direct your attention there, away from thinking.

Feel the aliveness throughout the body as you sit here and listen. And then if you want to make it into a structured or more real kind of so-called meditation, then you sit upright in a chair or on a floor, close your eyes and go deeply into that feeling of aliveness. That's quite beautiful too.

So that all your attention is in that intense sense of aliveness that pervades the entire body where it isn't really the body anymore. Well, you don't know what it is. It's just aliveness.

And there's no longer, when you go deeply into that aliveness, you can do it as I speak. If you close your eyes or even with your eyes open, close your eyes, go into that aliveness and even the sense of I am aware of the aliveness disappears because the consciousness and the aliveness become one. So this is a good meditation because the meditation object you merge with the meditation object.

There isn't you and the object. So when you go deeply into the inner body in your meditation with your eyes closed, you get a sense that you are that field. The inner body is the field of consciousness, the spaciousness.

You are that. It is aware of itself. You are aware of yourself.

No duality. When you go deeply into the body, there is no duality of the observer and the observed. The observer and the observed are one.

That's a wonderful realization. And then when you sense that strongly, then you open your eyes and stay connected with that sense and then look around the room or wherever you are and then you feel the depths and sense perceptions. Beautiful.

That's the way absolute balance between the outer world of form and the inner world of being. You're connected with being.

[Speaker 16] (2:28:13 - 2:28:14)

Wow.

[Speaker 1] (2:28:16 - 3:03:19)

So that's just a wonderful meditation practice. If you want to do it in a more formal way, do it once a day or so, twice a day. Sit somewhere quiet, erect, not lying in some...

because you would fall below thinking if you lie on a sofa or couch, want really relax and do your meditation. You will quickly fall below thinking. That's the only reason why people then attempt to sit erect.

And if you want to sit cross-legged on the floor and if it's... that can, on the one hand, can be a distraction. It can also be something that's part of your meditation.

If your legs start to hurt... These days it's painful for me to sit like that. My legs start to hurt after a few minutes.

But if that happens, that's fine. You can surrender to that and then there's a space around it. That too can become part of your practice.

I think Kim will have more to say about that. That too can become part of your practice. Pain arises while you sit.

Do you need to immediately do something about it or can you just say or say nothing, just be with it, which means there's a space around it. It's completely accepted for what it is and so that it just is. And that brings me to another aspect of meditation, any meditation that you do.

Discomfort may arise sometimes during meditation. Discomfort is something that everybody is familiar with. Some people spend their whole lives in discomfort, psychological discomfort.

And so if discomfort arises or irritation arises or impatience arises or any kind of mind condition arises and you can learn there to simply be with it, you accept the form that this moment takes in the form of pain in the knee. You accept the form of this moment. And that in itself can become a meditation.

And that is why in Zen, Zazen, school of Zen, they have a meditation that they call sitting. No structure whatsoever. All they tell you is sit and be with what is.

And you sit for hours and be with what is. That's the Zen meditation. And they put you in a room, you're facing the wall, and then they open the windows in the winter and the cold air comes in and you sit there shivering and you be with what is.

And then you observe your mind, what it comes up with. What am I doing here? What's the point of all this?

This is dreadful. I could be home in a warm bed. Oh my God, this is so stupid.

And then you be with the mind, the thoughts that arise in your mind. You see that, be with that. And you don't say to the thoughts, I mustn't have these thoughts.

No, whatever is, you be with what is. That's the Zen meditation that has no other structure or no structure except that sitting. That's why they don't even call it meditation.

They call it sitting. And so they ask you when you go to a monastery, how long have you been sitting? And you say, I'm not sitting, I'm standing.

What they mean is, how long have you been meditating? Oh, I've been sitting for 25 years. So hopefully they no longer need the Zen monastery.

And that's an interesting thing that's really where this is the way to live, to be with what is because what is already is. And to fight that is absurd. And so that's what you learn then in your Zen meditation, the most simple form of meditation, and some people would say the most difficult form of meditation, just sitting.

And again, you can use that even without a teacher. You can just sit. There's nothing much to learn beyond that, just sitting and being with what is.

The only thing you don't have, the helpful thing in some Zen monasteries, somebody to hit you with a stick from behind the moment he sees that you are drifting off somewhere. Whack! And then you have to say, Thank you.

So that meditation then, being with what is, has no specific meditation object except the condition that arises at this moment. That is, whatever condition arises at this moment, externally or internally, externally is the meditation object. An emotion, a thought, a feeling, a physical sensation, or externally, cold air, warm air, heat, cold, people making funny noises around you, disturbing noises, a lawn mower, drill, brrr, be with what is.

everything and again that's in this meditation whatever is is incorporated into the meditation so you can never say I can't meditate because this is happening well that's part of the meditation so whatever happens is incorporated into the meditation so there

are no excuses left then I can't meditate because the children are screaming well that's your meditation object be the space for that and then you learn really that's a it's a preparation for living in that way that's the ultimate the real meditation is and that's the awakened state of consciousness whatever arises at this moment whatever condition arises at this moment is part of the business of life and is therefore accepted fully doesn't mean you become powerless it means you contact enormous power you become an expression of enormous power which is the power and intelligence of life itself which can then act through you and come into this world true intelligence so and that can only come if you no longer obstruct the power of the present moment it's always there now the fact that you can't obstruct the power of the present moment does not mean that you are more powerful than it it means it's just somebody who closes as I sometimes give the example of closing the shutters the Sun can't come in it doesn't mean the shutters are more powerful than the Sun so this is the most powerful way to live then that the Zen meditation can just show it to you you can you can practice there and then the vital thing is to live it in daily life and for that so a meditation can be very helpful especially very simple meditations you don't need the complicated ones well except as I said the counting if your mind is totally mad then you have to start with the counting you can't just be with what is because you won't don't even know what is when you sit down your mind will immediately go off into what isn't here it doesn't it could go off into thinking about my investments what's going to happen to them be with what is no no I have to think about the investment make to think about the falling property prices God's what's going to happen if I'm never going to sell my house and my my life insurance my whatever anything except what is I need to worry about it if I don't worry about it it'll all fall apart I need to be responsible and hold it together by worrying about it especially in the middle of the night and so Zen teaches you then the simplicity of the isness that's really the secret of Zen is that simple to be with what is and that's why the Zen master said well the story goes that some disciples said went to their Zen master and said the other master from that other monastery we were just told that he can walk across the river he walks on water what can you do they asked the master and of course the famous answer of the Zen master was what can I do when I'm hungry I eat when I'm tired I sleep that's the answer it means he's absolutely just totally present in whatever arises that's all that is needed no stuff around it just the simplicity of this moment just facing this moment as it is when you are completely aligned with this moment you're in continuous meditation you're in meditation now by simply being with what is that's the that's the successful Zen meditator is that and not only that if you live in that way for as long as you live in that way you are the spiritual master you don't to be a spiritual master you don't need to know anything people sometimes think you need to have a lot of knowledge to be able to be a spiritual teacher it's not true the all you need is to be completely aligned with the present moment and then whatever is needed in the moment will come through you and you will never go beyond your expressed real life experience and you don't need to so any answer that's needed either in your own life or for somebody else if you can just be with what is become present and still then that's

primordial intelligence operating and is the spiritual teacher you never become a spiritual teacher and if you feel that okay I'm now ready to be a teacher no the best feeling is actually to feel that you are not ready to be a teacher and you don't know anything you have nothing to say and nothing to teach that's the start of every talk I give what else can I say I've been talking for so long what else is there to say it's completely empty nothing and that's what the teaching there is doesn't come from the person or the person's accumulated knowledge it comes through the person so the person really is never ready to be a teacher and if the person is ready then that's a delusion you don't have to be ready you just have to be spacious enough spacious in other words get out of the way as it's can put it if you get out of the way it happens through you and you can you live in that way it's not just I'm just using the example of spiritual teaching anything that you do that is truly powerful you have to in the moment of doing at least or in the moment of creation you have to get out of the way and it comes through you and every creative person unless the ego has come back and and obscured that wonderful flow of aliveness unless the ego has come back and then claims some kind of merit and so the creator feels superior to other humans because I did that no you didn't it happened because you got out of the way and then the primordial intelligence and the power of life the power of now came through you that's how it happened and that's how any true creation happens it's interesting I have some questions here questions that if people have been asking for example about art and music relationship between the state of being present and creating art or music of course there is it is their presence in music somebody asks well it depends on who who is creating the music how is it coming from and there is a fundamental difference anybody can verify of it and anybody in deep down knows it for example music where does it where does it truly original music come from and I'm not just talking about classical music even relatively simple music some of it comes from his place of originality and power it is inspired it almost comes into this world ready-made as if it were it's already it's already there somewhere and then the person who writes this music or plays this music is just receiving it and any great act of creation is a receiving and so the this is how and sometimes to a human being a stream comes where they are connected with that and every piece of music they write is has this originality and power to it and strange enough humans recognize it when they hear it those are lots of music that survives if you listen to the radio you will find many kinds of continuous playing music now most things that you listen to they they may be popular for a few weeks or a few months sometimes a few days and then it disappears but there are some pieces that don't disappear you hear them again and if you switch on the radio in 10 years you still hear that piece if you switch on the radio in 50 years from now they're still playing it some and why there is a qualitative difference between that and ordinary stuff that the mind tries to create without the connectedness with where all creativity comes from and so it's contrived it may even be clever but it hasn't have that that quality so even simple music like the Beatles songs they came from somewhere deeper it's it's not some people say well you can't compare the Beatles to Beethoven's 9th symphony but you can they

came from the same place it's just a bit of 9th symphony is obviously more complex but they both have this spark of originality to them that a human just cannot create it the human mind alone cannot do that and it can even happen that a person can spend a whole life making music and only one one night he or she connects with that ground where all creativity arises that was the case for example I read about it recently there was a woman in South Africa who went to court because her husband had composed a piece of music the only good thing that he was ever remembered for he composed a piece of music but because he was a black man at that time her husband had died at that time in South Africa black people had no rights so here he sold this piece of music for five dollars and he had been playing music all his life only one night he wrote this piece that came from a deeper everything else that he wrote disappeared this piece survived because it had that essential quality of aliveness and originality to it and so she finally got several million dollars from this one piece of music that he composed one night which is which at first became popular throughout Africa and then throughout the world it's called the lion sleeps tonight the lion sleeps tonight wonderful just there's something there you just you can't make that up so that's the I'd like to sing the whole thing I can't remember the words so no matter what you do in life whatever you do the that connectedness is vital and knowing that it's not up to me ultimately up to me is only to connect with the the depths of being within that's up to me and then whatever you do that the power will flow into it and if it's very limited what you do then sometimes you may let's say you have a job in a factory and there's just no scope for anything much to happen if if all you do is pick up a box from here open it and put put in three things close the box and hand it on and pick up another box then it doesn't the important thing is not to fall into negativity and say there's nothing and connect with the aliveness and if life sees that there's no outlet in your present circumstances for the power within you life will put you somewhere else the first thing that may happen is that you lose your job and then because you're connected with the power within you're not going to complain because you you're going to be like the the man that I mentioned the other day who whatever happened he shouted God is great so if you lose your job you say God is great great it must be the right thing and so often it might look negative because life needs to disrupt your present circumstances to make room for something else so if you connect with the power within and life when I say life I mean primordial the one intelligence that pervades the universe if if there is no outlet in your present circumstances for power the power that is within you then life will remove your present circumstances and create circumstances where there is an outlet but if you are already doing something and if that what you're doing already could become infinitely enhanced if you connect with that source of creativity within you then you will find that you stay where you are it's just an enormous expansion if you are playing in the street the guitar or whatever for a few pennies busking in the and you suddenly you connect with that and you even begin to play original things then something will happen and that thing will expand life may not take you away from your guitar it will empower the guitar and suddenly somebody walks past you and stops for a second saying come and see me so that's the wherever you are

trust your responsibility is to embrace the power of the present moment within you to not resist the isness of whatever condition is now that obstructs the power so I'm really we've been talking about meditation but it always comes back to living how to live in this moment now that's what it's all about and becoming good at meditation is nothing the question is are you good at living do you live connected with the power or cut off from it the power of yourself ultimately the power of the universe so then what you learn in these in the Zen meditation is not to complain about anything in your life but to incorporate everything into the into your meditation and now your meditation is your life that's ultimately what it is it's not the little meditation period that can be a it can be a practice ground for life but ultimately what matters is life and life is now so if you're practicing incorporating whatever happens while you sit in meditation into the meditation nothing can happen that will that will obstruct your meditation because it's immediately and then nothing can happen in your life that will obstruct the power but not if you complain and resist what is the power comes when there is inner alignment with what is the isness of now no matter what form that takes that's where power comes into your life and that's in all the that's in all the teachings and so that's all that meditation to can teach you show you to do you don't need time it's a little absurd to say I need time to become good at accepting the present moment or to take a three-year course in accepting the present moment I'm learning to accept the present moment but I'm not there yet so there's nothing that you need to add to your life so that you can finally accept the present moment there are many delusions that the mind will bring up why why you why you can't do it now I can accept everything except where I live or accept whatever that my parents don't understand me or accept the remember that acceptance has nothing to do with some kind of story in your mind that's not acceptance this is often a delusion when people misunderstand when I speak of acceptance so some people say okay I need to accept that I have no money in the bank that I'm poor that I've ruined my life I need to accept that I live in a dreadful place or if you call it dreadful what where's the acceptance you've already judged it as bad you have already called your life I need to accept that I'm ruined that all my investments have collapsed and I'm completely ruined all these things are stories in your mind it would be absurd I need or I need to accept that I'm I'm ill of course you may be ill from the point of view of medical viewpoint that may be the case but that is not what you need to accept because this feeling I am ill is a mental construct all you need to accept is the reality of this moment and in this moment there is no illness but there may be pain there may be discomfort there may be disability there may be weakness in the body this is this is how this so-called illness manifests at this moment so all you need to accept is whatever manifests in this moment not some idea around it then you get into illusion so the person who is who has an illness you don't accept I need to accept that I have cancer that I have AIDS that I I need to accept whatever no that's the story acceptance only concerns this moment whatever it is that you feel or experience at this moment so you're not denying that you're ill nor you nor do you subscribe to that belief that you're ill you just leave that alone and you address only the conditions that arise at this moment in your life and

that's what you accept and with that often if it is an illness then you accept only the symptom as it appears at this moment because it is already there at this moment there's pain there's a disability there's this there's that that's what is that becomes part of your meditation practice which is your life so your life because all you ever need to accept is that let's say you're in prison let's say your sentence is 25 years so you sit in that cell and I'm talking about that because often I get correspondence from people in prison so you if you then say okay I need to accept that I'm stuck in here for the next 25 years and that I've I've messed my whole life up completely I need to accept that no that's a story and that's time all you need to accept is at this moment you're sitting here there's a little window you're looking out of the window you're breathing you feel the aliveness of the inner body there's a little metal plate in front of you and you're eating a piece of bread and there's a glass of water and you're drinking that and there are the walls that you're seeing and these are the conditions of this moment and they are as they are you add nothing to them like dislike good that's the Zen master you're the master you add nothing to it and you the bare conditions of this moment are as they are that's what you accept and with that power comes and with that internally you become free of dependency on external conditions that's what incredible power comes into your life and it's often the case that miracles happen when you enter and live in that state of consciousness and even so you might have 25 years sentence in prison and you could find that unexpectedly something happens and you're free not and I don't necessarily mean an opportunity comes to escape it could come in a different way it's probably won't come in that way and if it doesn't you're still free in prison and I've had correspondence from people in prison said I found freedom here and to them the prison has become like a Buddhist like a Zen monastery whatever condition arises is part of the meditation and so that's the I'm saying that so that you don't it's easy to misunderstand the term acceptance acceptance is always the simplicity of this moment that is to be accepted not a story around this moment and then gradually you learn to live less and less with stories imposing stories on your life and traveling through life with the heaviness of stories of what who you are in relationship to the world not good enough or better than most but if you think you're better than most underneath is the fear that you're not good enough anyway that's why you have to think you're better than most all kinds of stuff that people live with and live through no just your life is now that's the life is always only always now and that is the focal point of your consciousness now and you're aligned with now and the moment you're aligned with now you become the space for now you were it already but you didn't know it now consciously you become the space for now and you're free and that's where power comes suddenly through you and only if enough humans begin to live in that way is the world going to truly change and then you have fulfilled the purpose of your life on earth aligned with the evolutionary purpose of the entire not just the planet the evolutionary purpose of the entire universe wants that it wants the flowering of that new consciousness to happen and that's why we're here it's not going to happen it's happening us being here is because it's happening we are not in expectation of utopia or something like that we are not in

expectation that a new world is going to arise no we are here because the new world which is based on the new state of consciousness is arising there's no future expectation and we don't need the world to change to become free no becoming free comes first then the world changes it's so simple that's why the mind says oh this is hard

[Speaker 4] (3:05:12 - 3:05:56)

hi I have a question about conflict resolution can you suggest ways to maintain presence in a relationship when an issue arises over which you and the other person completely disagree yet a compromise must be found can you read that again slower okay can you suggest ways to maintain presence in a relationship when an issue arises over which you and the other person completely disagree and yet a compromise must be found that's everyone's marriage

[Speaker 2] (3:05:56 - 3:13:44)

isn't it yeah we like to hang on to those opinions and ideas and when we do it's very difficult to hear the other person it doesn't mean that we have to agree with them because you have your own but so long as you're identified with your own then you block the opportunity for expansion and mutual connection to resolve this can you drop your would you call it your idea or your opinion or your thought about it whatever the conflict is you have an opinion about it can you completely let that go and just hear the others first you heard yourself because you know you're pretty well probably sticking to it right can you kind of put that aside and just listen it doesn't mean that they're right and it doesn't mean that you're right either doesn't mean that they're wrong and it doesn't mean that you're wrong but can you actually hear their point of view if you're stuck on your own you won't hear it if you can get let go of your own you can hear it and then when you hear it maybe something will go oh I never thought of it that way before oh okay then you go back and you look at yours hmm well maybe I can let that one go because actually there's something in what he's saying here or maybe it's that okay a solution can come through because there's an opening so long as you're firmly planted in your view life cannot get through this but if you open and be the space for allowing life to come through then creativity something can arise we want conflict resolved right now don't we I mean actually you know men have this way of being able to walk away and give it no they do honestly I've watched this they have this way of walking away to give it space you know and women they're like a second where are you going honey like come back here like I want to talk about this now we've got to solve this now right now and then we get in a house where is he going like why is he leave right now we can solve this right now where did they get that from being able to walk away you know and where did we get that from that we got to solve this right now I mean that's not in all cases I'm generalizing here it could be the reverse too but you know there's kind of a higher degree of men walking out don't you think so okay Wow what a teacher that is he's walked out okay I'm left with this was I open did I let my viewpoint go because really if I

was open then he wouldn't have probably walked out okay I'm left with myself okay let's see if I can enter this next one being open the next round and at the same time because you know know that women it's it's it's a feminine aspect what can you say it's it's part I mean we're just more emotional we feel our emotions and there's nothing wrong with that so don't start you know especially you men out there judge or even women this is what we do because we have also come into a more masculine world and our masculinity is starting to come out we judge ourselves for our emotions and here in the West let's put that down no no no can't feel that can't go there it's just part of our not only conditioning but it's part of who we are yes we're trying to break through conditioning there will be one time that we're not reactive to emotions but right now we have had and women had to suppress this so you better believe that when something is going to be pressed down soon enough it's going to erupt and maybe perhaps the challenge then for men would be can you allow this without walking out and just be the space for the eruption but of course if you're gonna go into your own pain body attack about it then it is best that you walk out because you don't want to get into a big conflict right so we need this expression because we are expressions of consciousness but right now because of the way we have agreed in our society that we have to be a certain way and let's not look at this let's keep this down so let's find this mutual understanding to come together in consciousness to express to find a way that we can move through life together in this has been the challenge not only in personal relationships although they come up there the most but in all relationships that arise in the moment whether it's the person at the checkout counter so even your point of view is not it can you let go of that just to be you the stillness to be the space in

[Speaker 1] (3:13:44 - 4:15:16)

which forms arise even conflict thank you as I often point out it's helpful as we sit here to be aware of the present moment and your presence here to feel your presence not your thought activity but a deeper presence without which thought couldn't even happen just to feel that which cannot be defined that dimension in you that has nothing to do with the personality but without which the personality could not exist nothing to do with emotions but without which emotions could not be nothing to do with thoughts or sense perceptions but without which thoughts and sense perceptions could not even be that is presence and that is inseparable from the depths of what we call the present moment so in the dimension of depth what we call the present moment which is far more than the surface of the present moment which is all this in the dimension of depth you and the present moment are one the realization to put that into words like that you and the now ultimately in the deepest sense are one that I had not verbalized that when I was writing the power of now so unfortunately it didn't get into the book so there's something throughout your life in the dimension of depth that never changes and you can call it can the space of now not what happens in the space but the deepest place of now you can call that who you are in your essence formless dimension spirit spiritual dimension and

that that's the essence of spirituality is to feel that in the background of your being and then you become less dependent on externals and that's a great liberation not to be dependent for your sense of happiness or aliveness or fulfillment on external things because they come and go all the time so the they like me to have a topic that you can name for my talks here so let's call it freedom from externals and to introduce it I just like to read to you an extremely short true story takes about one minute which comes from the Sufi tradition the mystical branch of Islam a deeply peaceful form of Islam yes it exists so I would like to do one in one of our sessions soon spent a whole session on the Sufis they're wonderful so I will read this little extremely short true story to you which is all to do with freedom from externals the title of the story is the slave without a master wandering in a patchwork robe his face blackened by the Sun a certain dervish dervish are Sufi mendicants kind of wandering in a patchwork robe his face blackened by the Sun a certain dervish arrived at Kufa where he was seen by a merchant the merchant spoke to him and decided that he must be a lost slave and the merchant said because of your mild manner I will call you career which means good are you not a slave that I am said career the merchant said I will take you home and you can work for me until I find your master I would like that said career for I have been seeking my master for such a long time he worked for many years with this man who taught him to be a weaver hence his second name Nassau's so his name became if I pronounce it correctly career Nassau's good weaver after his long services feeling guilty of his exploitation the merchant said to him I do not know who you are but you are now free to go carry a Nassau's the great master of the way traveled onward to Mecca without regrets for he had discovered how to continue his development in spite of having no name and being treated like a slave he was a teacher of Shibli of Ibrahim covers and many more of the great teachers of the Sufis he died over a thousand years ago at the age of 120 this is a somewhat extreme example of somebody practicing being free of dependency on external conditions I believe that the Sufi who became later the Sufi master that he voluntarily said yes I am a slave he accepted that situation as the background to his practice now it says in the story he was able to continue his development is in a development despite having no name or just a name that somebody gave him and being a nobody and what is that inner development that the story refers to continued his inner development it is a dissolving of any kind of mental or conceptual sense of identity form identity so that that in you which is beyond form can emerge more fully and as that in you which is beyond form which is a deep sense of aliveness and peace that emerges from within as you let go of dependency on your thinking to tell you who you are other people who tell you who you are you let go of dependency on that complete freedom from externals so it sometimes happens that when external conditions become particularly unpleasant or difficult at first there's a inner resistance there's steep suffering and sometimes the point is reached when the resistance which is of course consists ultimately of mental judgments about your situation the resistance is relinquished you let go of calling your situation anything it just is as it is that's the beginning then of freedom from external conditions but we don't have to wait until we

stand on the deck of the Titanic that's going down or a similar situation we don't have to wait for that it may happen but it may not happen and of course there's no guarantee that then there will be a complete acceptance it seems almost impossible in some situations to completely accept a situation let's start with more simple things and look at your own life and see in what areas of your life you are dependent for your happiness or well-being or sense of fulfillment on external conditions and how perhaps how easily a change in external conditions can trigger immediately a change in your inner state and to see for example that as you're standing in line somewhere for a little longer than you think you should be standing in line as you stand there already irritation arises been here for 10 minutes and the the irritation of course it's a thought I've been here for 10 minutes and it's too long and as soon as you have the thought this is too long they should do something whoever they are they should do something this is not right then the body responds with an emotion so the situation is it's wonderful to examine that because when you see it in yourself it's an it's already a beginning of an awakening there's no personal shortcoming in you because oh I did that I did that when we were standing in line this morning well that you did that is perfectly normal but that you realize that you did that that's beginning of awakening it's even deeper awakening if you could realize you are doing it in this moment of course it's a little easier to realize it afterwards because the energy behind the thought is not as strong so let's go back to that situation of course life consists of things like that little things in every day things arise and you get upset and it's normal but upset is only a small beginning of suffering irritation is a mild form of suffering and then comes anger and then comes all the complaining all the mind movements that go with that so stay with one simple thing because the mechanism of the simple thing is the same even in bigger things how you lose peace in their peace so easily I'm not nothing personal many of you are already beyond that I'm talking to those few and the others can just enjoy it's how easily inner peace is lost for little things for little things waiting for too long somebody not treating me the way they should be treating me being unpleasant rude a person in the traffic doing something that he should not be doing all kinds of little things or you break something or you lose a little thing and you don't realize that the most precious thing is your inner state in a peace by peace I don't mean a dead peace where you desensitize yourself and say I don't feel I feel okay but you don't feel alive anymore the true inner peace is a deep sense of aliveness to feel fulfilled and it's inseparable from from it's a kind of joy not necessarily the ecstatic joy you don't go through life Wow some people try it but you can't sustain that but a peaceful and alive energy field in the background that's inner peace that's the most precious thing in your life far more important than where you are or what's happening around you and it's given up because of mental habits you lose it so often so once you're aware of that then you can observe the mechanism how you lose that how quickly it can happen and when you're really alert you can see that what's the mechanism behind it and the mechanism behind it is of course the thought that arises that says something about this this shouldn't be happening it complains or whatever it does the thought but you don't know it's just a

thought to you it is inseparable from the situation so if you don't know that the thought you have about a situation is inseparable from the situation that's unconsciousness because then you say it's a dreadful day because it's raining you have mixed up a judgment with the external condition it's a dreadful day not realizing that the dreadful is your mental judgment and today is as it is or you say standing in line here for so long is dreadful no you've mixed up two things a judgment and the situation but if you disentangle them and then you see here is what is and here's what my mind is saying about it and then suddenly you see that by believing totally in every judgment that arises you immediately lose your peace you become dependent on external conditions for your happiness so once you see that then you can actually no longer believe in the judgment or you can even relinquish it and that's when that comes when you realize your power to do that for the first time in situations where usually you would have complained or become irritated or angry and this and suddenly you find oh I'm not complaining anymore I'm not irritated or the thought comes in you say okay this is the thought and here's what is I just stay with what is because all the thought does is it adds suffering the situation might be physical discomfort but it's not suffering this is as it is that's an enormous liberation when you can be in a place that before your mind would have called I don't want to be here well but you are here and then you're just here without any judgment and suddenly it's okay that's the beginning of freedom from externals and that's liberation and that's continuous practice with all the little things that happen throughout your day you practice in that way so that gradually you go into situations without mental judgments and you still know what you need to do the mind says no I will never do anything anymore then you still know what you need to do and action you can take action but not based on condemnation and negative energy so to become free of externals is an essential part of course of spiritual awakening we're leaving aside the extreme situations we get relatively rare of course that also is extremely useful to look at but let's just work with normal daily life people the most challenging thing in your spiritual awakening is other people because other people use most of people are identified with their mind and they can easily pull you into identification with your mind and the question is whether you are able to accept the other human as he or she is in this moment as you accept a place where you are as you accept a situation you're in without looking to your mind to tell you something about that situation is this something to be practiced tried out in your life continuously and more and more what arises then is a consciousness that is not conceptual an intelligence that is not conceptual that then begins to operate also it's not just passive it begins to operate in your life it takes the place of what was operating before which is the mind made thought-based sense of identity with its conditioning and reactivity which asks what's the next thing I can react to it's looking many human minds or egoic minds are looking for the next thing to react to they don't know it of course and the slightest thing you say or do you can they go you should know better you shouldn't be saying that so there's a the usual thing that runs your life the egoic self consisting of usual thought patterns gradually is replaced by a deeper intelligence that is not conceptual and non-

judgmental and it comes up and it looks at the world without imposing judgments on it and at that moment whenever that happens you are free of dependency on external conditions because you're only dependent for your inner state you're only dependent on external conditions as long as you believe in your thoughts about the external conditions external conditions including places situations people so in some ancient traditions people in a very extreme way they saw the truth of this and they practiced they said okay I'm going to become a mendicant I'm going to give up dependency on anything and I will just go from place to place with nothing give up all dependency on external conditions as a spiritual practice this is not practical in the West almost impossible to do in the West the whole cultural background is not there for that we have to do it in some other way if you want to be a mendicant you can still do it in India besides of course many places are too cold in the West to be a homeless wanderer I experienced homelessness for a while and it was a beautiful experience it could have been terrible if my mind still had had some judgments about it but as already the mind had given up complaining and calling any situation bad or calling my life useless or having some kind of opinion about who I am without that opinion without all these mind structures this moment was simply as it is as it always is and that it is wonderful then to be able to appreciate the aliveness of this moment no matter what form it takes this is the practice now you still have to work with your mind and be vigilant so that you can be there when your mind brings up thoughts don't believe in the judgments of your mind don't rely on the judgments of your mind be the deeper consciousness the unconditioned consciousness behind the mind the challenges of life are very helpful without them you would go to sleep people complain and say I want my life to be more conducive to spiritual work I want to have more time to really do what well I want to do and really if that were the case for even if if all if the for people to create great things if those people who had perfect conditions in their lives to create then the aristocrats in past centuries would have been the great artists and writers and philosophers but the strange thing is it very few of them they had everything they didn't need to work they called all the others the working classes it's where the word comes from because there was another class it didn't work so there was that class they just lived on their land their possessions and that huge houses everywhere the chateaus in France the mansions in England and and so yes they were very cultured they read many things they had great paintings in their houses very few of them actually became great artists or philosophers or painters or writers or scientists a few but they should have been much higher proportion because they had ideal condition they didn't have to work for a living they but no but their life was not focused enough it was dissipated and often the great great creators were people who had to struggle very hard against all the odds and if there's a similar thing here in spirituality the word as far as spiritual awakening is concerned don't demand better conditions for spiritual awakening that's a very common thing and that's of course is a mind creation it's the mind loves that the mind also loves to complain about your situation and why it's not good enough for your spiritual awakening if it were different yes if I could allow if I had enough money to go to travel around like that woman did who

wrote that book that has now become a movie if I had the money to do that I could explore and I could go and see the teachers and that would be it I could I could really do something for my body so that it doesn't have all the ailments anymore I could go to the greatest spas and resorts and have massages every day and be have hot stones on and rubbed in oils and rose petals and surely I would get enlightened very quickly and now if you tried it suddenly let's say you have enough money and then come back back after a few years and let me know how it's going and you will find no what seems the most conducive situation for spiritual awakening to the mind is not necessarily the most conducive situation for you for spiritual awakening it's just what the mind's opinion that unfortunately or fortunately that's not the reality of it and the strange thing is the reality of it is that the situation that you are in right now is the one that is right for you to work with for spiritual awakening this situation is right it was otherwise how do you know that because it is it is the totality has brought this about this moment and that's been given to you to work with so to speak to apply consciousness to in the same way that a sculptor who works with wood is giving a piece given a piece of wood this is the piece of wood for you to work with and for some people their life situation looks very easy there may be a few but often you're deluded when you look at the external situation of a human being say oh I wish I had a life like that which is the case when you read magazine certain magazines that tell you the glossy surface of famous people's and rich people's lives and you believe that what you see all you see is the glossy surface that's not their life at all in many cases if you could look deeper you would see that they are just as miserable as everybody else in many cases more miserable because they've got nothing else to project themselves into because they already have everything where do I go from here I have everything I'm still unhappy well try some other extreme sensation maybe that will do it I can buy any sensation take any substance maybe that will do it and I reach out here and there because I can afford it I can afford to reach out and look everywhere for experiences and then after a few years you sing I can't get no and so your your present situation has been given to you in the same way that as if you were a sculptor and the universe gives you a piece to work with and some pieces look almost impossible to work with what what can I make out of this but often the most beautiful things come out of things that initially look impossible to work with they require why they require more intense consciousness they require more alertness if you have difficult life situation that we could call it karma if you have a difficult life situation it requires more alert presence to transcend it to transform it to dissolve it to all the old patterns in your life if you have your life is relatively easy your chances of going beyond the personality are not that great as it becomes more difficult and you suffer because of your life situation of course your motivation is much stronger to go beyond that so with that comes the ability to just accept your situation as it is situation is one thing the situation has a continuity between past and future my life situation this is where it is been married five times or you can the mind can say all kinds of things there I failed four or five marriages failed at business ventures failed at this succeeded at that and then failed again that's the past however the mind interprets it there's no failing and

succeeding it just what happened and then there's your possible future where you want to go and your relationships at the moment your work situation your financial situation your health situation that's all your life situation now you have to your life situation if you don't get out of your life situation then you'll remain stuck you need to cut through this continuity between past and future in your life situation that all the stuff that makes up what is your life cut through your life situation say and this is vital vital teaching to become free of externals because your life situation is all to do with externals the externals of my life right now it may be good right now it may be not so good this is the external situation of my life now before I carry on in my life so-called there's no such thing as my life is just a verbal thing my life for a large part of my adult life my life situation was messy it was people you would have thought just as silly but where am I going what am I doing what and so many things I started and let and then abandoned them and it was messy and the strange thing is you may something in you may resonate with that because many life situations are messy there isn't neatly bundled things that this and then I succeeded at that and then I succeeded at that and then you have your walls full of diplomas and wherever you succeeded but it's more it's in most cases it's it is messy with lots of unfinished businesses and very uncertain future where are you going what's going to happen I am I going to make it well you might make it for a little while until you don't make it everything comes to an end in this realm of form but there is a deeper realm which you need to access and which is cannot be found in your life situation it can only be found in the singularity of the present moment which I call life so you have to extract so to speak from your perhaps somewhat messy life situation extract the present moment as the cause and miracle says single out this instant out of that whole flow of past and future as your life situation so what's left I have a life situation everybody has with which it's problems no life situation is free of problems it's always thinks that every these people are all fine I'm the one with the problems it's not true there everybody has their problems they might just be hiding them very well so you have the life situation but it is vital that as much as possible you extract from that what is the absolute reality about my life situation and ask yourself that question and the answer is always this moment the only thing that's absolutely real about my life is this moment just I'm sitting here talking looking flowers breathing feeling perhaps some aliveness suddenly because I'm singling out this moment this is the absolute reality of your life always what you call your life situation is a relative reality it is much less real than this your future the next moment tomorrow is nothing compared to this and when tomorrow comes it only comes as this so to live as if tomorrow were more important than this is madness it's called normal living so your state of consciousness then needs to become more and more present moment centered you can still deal with the things in your life situation but you have access to something more vital and then in the midst even of dealing with things in your life situation of going from here to there to an important business meeting or to an interview or doing this and that or sitting there talking to people or or sitting there looking at the looking for a job because you lost your job looking at the internet or wherever you find jobs and in that moment get out of your

life situations okay what is the reality of this moment is am I okay at this moment or not no if you can't get out of your life situation rarely rarely will you say that I'm okay because you're trapped in in that whole stratum of thought ultimately it's all thought your whole past is thought and some emotions connected with thought your future is thought emotions connected with those thoughts but has no reality apart from those thoughts because when your past happened it was the present moment when the future happens it will be the present moment which you if you don't acknowledge that you miss it always you miss the whole thing I've said this a times before but it it always seems new even to me it is so in so vitally important so this moment single out as the cause in miracle says out of that whole problematic life situation single out this moment what does that mean pay attention to this moment with that comes an alertness oh and then you will realize this moment is actually not so bad I thought my life was so dreadful but this moment just this is actually okay it might even be more than okay if you look more deeply it might feel good to be breathing even though you might have lost your job which is part of your life situation and yet you're breathing and yet there's a flower there and yet there's the sky and yet there's a liveness pervading your entire body that's the present moment and you suddenly can even be grateful for life you don't have to be grateful for your life situation how can you grateful for all the things that happen to me I can't be no you don't need to be gratitude is only required for this moment you acknowledge there is a goodness here that the mind doesn't know anything about and you cannot exit it through conceptual thinking that is becoming independent of external conditions because otherwise you look for that goodness which is deep within you you look for that goodness in external things and never find it not for long there is sometimes you think you found it but it's not it and you look for the goodness in some resolution of your life situation the happy ending of my search for fulfillment even if some happy ending comes what comes after that more problems the happy ending is often the wedding what comes after that it's better not to show it or the happy ending is I find the great job okay and then what what comes after that the problems that come with that great job and that's not to say that don't look for anything you still play in the world of form you still continue to look for a job you don't say no I feel so good now I'm not even going to look for a job anymore that can happen it happened to me for a while until the balance came back into my life between inner and outer and this is why I'm telling you you don't have to go there but if you do that's fine too if you feel so good say okay in my case miraculously I got sustained by the universe things came often at the last minute never more than knowing what that will live on for one more day but what about the day after tomorrow don't know and that worked I'm sure Jesus said these things more or less exactly the same that look how the flower lives he said it's not worried about tomorrow it's totally present in the now and yet life looks after it it's sustained by the one life the one intelligence that underlies everything the one consciousness it sustains it gives a look at the birds he says look at the flowers of the field he wanted you to get in touch with nature to feel that which sustains nature also sustains you but you don't need to you continue then to to do what you have to do without the stress and then everything

flows with more ease and then you get a job interview and you go to their job interview feeling good because as you are traveling to the interview you're sitting on the bus it feels good to be here and you're looking at the tree and the birds and the sky and you feel the aliveness in your body and you feel the the presence within you the presence that you are and that's the present moment and it feels good and then you arrive not as a needy little me at the job interview but as somebody who is happy to be there and I'm sure people will like you for that because even if their mind is totally mad they might sense something in your presence yeah in other words you're much more likely to get the job if you are come from the place of I'm already fulfilled that and everything flows with much greater ease but the practice is single out this moment as much as possible and pay attention to it and then with that comes a little while after comes the gratitude which is the most powerful thing there is gratitude is inseparable from feeling the goodness of the present moment the moment you feel the goodness even in unlikely places because the goodness isn't ultimately out there you feel it deep within in in very hard places you have to go even deeper within to find it and there it is it doesn't really have a physical location but if I had to point to a physical location it's kind of all around here and that is liberation that's liberation not only liberation from external conditions liberation from your mind and then life unfolds with greater ease not free of problems things challenges continue to be thrown at you but they they bounce off or get transformed because you no longer complain about the challenges of life you no longer have a little me that says this shouldn't be happening why is this happening to me to me shouldn't be happening to me but it is and without the complaining entity the resisting entity immediately the situation is comes into the field of aware presence and then the challenge becomes transformed so don't expect freedom from challenges it's not going to happen you don't need it in fact all that happens to tell this is a deepening of that presence so the practice is singling out this moment and then that's the end of stress too I'll just explain to you when I occasionally I give talks I'll just explain briefly how I experience it giving a talk let's say the talk is at 8 o'clock in the evening I start getting ready at 6 and if there were a mental projection a mental thought movement said okay at 6 I'm giving a talk to 2,000 people what am I going to talk about what is it going to be powerful enough are they going to like me are they going to be receptive what what if the words don't come anymore they expect a lot I might be able to satisfy them this is an important event a very important talk so many people some people from the New York Times are coming oh my god and of course they're totally going to totally misinterpret everything oh my god that would be very stressful so how do I not I mean can I not be stressed before this important talk first is you let go of the idea that some important event is coming up and so you single out this moment which is I'm getting dressed and then I'm looking out of the window and then put on my shoes and then I sit there breathing and there's just this moment there's only ever this moment why should this important event has no reality yet except as a mind structure so I'm not going there there's just this then the phone rings as the car is here okay I go out elevator down one step at a time going to the car drives off look out of the window traffic people houses it's

just this moment very simple nothing big just this moment then you go arrive at the place go into the green room sit there eat a banana just this moment stay with this moment it's so natural you don't even have to try anymore it's just that what is and then you said breathe somebody comes in I've been in one or two weird places where theaters where they have a certain structure and then they are the there's a loudspeaker in the green room and then it's ten at five to eight the voices the show starts in five minutes I didn't know it was going to be a show but I'm not going to believe that because there's only this moment and then on stage there's only this chair and there's this little man sitting on the chair breathing and looking and what is it that this moment requires it requires me to be still and look and after a while I realized that it words are required and then I start often by saying make sure you're completely here this is it it's this moment take your attention into this there's no big event it's simple and there isn't 2,000 people it's just one person there and I'm talking to one person and that's all there's no there's no some mental excitement around it just just stay with the simplicity of the present moment and that people wait for some grand important thing in their lives finally when is it going to when is what are these expressions when is my boat coming in or whatever the expressions are well it's if you're looking to it in the future it's not coming and if it comes you won't be happy stay with the simplicity of this moment and honor it then your life becomes deep don't expect some great thing stay with your life consists of little things even if you became some important public figure president of the United States even he if he is just can only do one thing at a time can only step into the car step out of the car go to his desk answer the phone talk to people look into the camera one thing at a time and then go to bed have breakfast and the same thing happens again so the instead of then instead of having your life centered on past and future and your life situation you make the center of your life the present moment and the rest also you give it attention as it's needed but on a practical level only you do what's needed to for the future you remember your past what you need to remember you remember it without looking to it for some kind of validation of who you are because that's not in the past the who you are is can only be found in the depths of yourself in this moment in the presence that the very presence that you can sense at this moment as you sit here you can't define it but you know there is a presence the rest may be a dream but underlying the dream there is a presence there is the light of consciousness you are that not what appears in the light it comes and goes it's fine so that's the the secret then is more and more this pay attention to this and then whatever you do also becomes empowered the power of the present moment flowing into what you do that's a practice and you gradually become free you become free of the the personality the person that before was this heaviness of the me you become free of the conditioned entity which still operates from time to time through you but there is something more vital that shines through the conditioned entity and occasionally I've seen it in people who were close to death there the conditioned entity subsided and there was just surrender and aliveness and light but you don't have to wait for death it's now access that now in your life so that is what our Sufi who later became the Sufi master what he

learned when he became willingly accepted the position of slave what he learned was and then he started to learn how to weave for him then for years only this moment and he was weaving every day weaving and being just present with that no name nobody just a presence behind the weaving and then life said you can move on now and he moved on and through this training his personality had dissolved and his presence emerged and he was then recognized as a great teacher so he wasn't looking for ideal conditions well he was in a way but not what one would have thought as ideal conditions for awakening in one sense you can be grateful for your life situation is because it's taken you to this moment where you wake up all the stuff that's gone wrong in my life has taken me to this moment I'm talking for myself to all the stuff that's gone wrong has taken me to this moment where I realize the possibility of awakening where I realize how good to the present moment actually is in the depths so gratitude comes hi we're gonna do a

[Speaker 2] (4:15:16 - 4:50:01)

exercise called gathering the Chi the Chi being the universal life force within and without we can do this exercise in two ways either seated in a chair or standing if you're in your chair come to sit at the edge of your chair with your feet flat on the floor and your spine erect placing your hands onto your down to in your lower abdomen which is about three finger widths four finger widths below your navel you may wish to close your eyes and just come into your body for a moment feeling your breath noticing your body whether there's any tension tightness just go to those areas and relax your body relax your shoulders relax your jaw relax the hips your legs your feet your entire body allow whatever thoughts to rise and let them go staying unattached to thoughts allow whatever sounds around you to be as they are feel the sensations in your body feel your inner body the energy within and on your next inhale reaching with your right arm reach behind you begin to gather the Chi from the universe feeling the energy in your hands outside your body and exhaling it in to your Dantian into the belly inhale your left arm behind you gathering the Chi and exhaling it into the belly right side inhale and exhale keeping your attention focused inward inhale left side exhale into your belly one more time inhale and it's the whole universe you're gathering the energy so in your mind's eye your attention imagine the edge of the universe and just stop and feel for a moment with your hands on your Dantian relaxing the body lowering your hands and when you inhale gather the Chi from the heavens inhaling your arms up palms facing each other and exhaling bringing down the energy to the Dantian again inhale the energy from the heavens arms up palms facing each other and exhaling the Chi down through the crown of your head through your third eye through your throat your heart and down to the Dantian again inhale and exhale and stop and feel let's raise that Chi up to your heart bringing your hands together in prayer and then send it out through the whole universe your energy your love and watch come back to you tenfold bring it back to your belly again raise it up to your heart and send love throughout the whole world one more time

raise the Chi up to your heart and send the love and energy to the whole universe and bring it back to your Dantian what you give out comes back to you tenfold so let's do that one more time all three movements putting together in one flow gathering the Chi from the universe right side inhale and exhale it into your Dantian the left side and bring it to the Dantian gather the Chi from heaven inhaling and exhaling it down to the crown your third eye the throat your heart and bring it down to your belly inhale the Chi up to your heart and send love throughout the whole universe and receive the love back into your belly again left side gather the Chi from the universe and the right side going at your own pace and inhaling the Chi from the heavens bringing it down to the crown keeping your awareness on this energy that's both inside you and outside bringing it into the belly and when you're ready to share love throughout the whole world and your energy bring it up to your heart and send it out and watch it come back to you as it always will and just stop for a moment and feel being present with this moment feeling your belly just feeling the energy relax the belly and when you're ready slowly open your eyes taking in the world of form continue feeling the energy in your body as you go about your everyday life the practice is keeping some attention inward and not becoming lost in the world of form.

Thank you for joining me in gathering the Chi. Thank you. Namaste.

So let's begin with a meditation and it's a meditation about asking a question something that you may have a question that you're wanting answered a concern that you have that you would like to receive an answer for and contemplating meditating on this question and be open to receive the answer and it may not come in this moment may not come today but the whole point is that you are asking yourself your deep inner self the self that knows and realizes all. So usually when we have this question that we ask it's like this little self of ours that wants to know right the mind wants to know and we know that the mind that has created a situation the true solution cannot be found in the mind but the answer can come through you or through life itself when we let go of what we can call the mind of thoughts and even our question so we'll take a moment so you can formulate which question what it is what concern what so-called problem you may have and take this time just to formulate that so get as comfortable as possible physically and you may wish to close your eyes and if you are sitting with your arms crossed let's just kind open them up so you can be this open space and channel to receive so you may wish to close your eyes and just take this moment to formulate the question and when you have that question say it to yourself again but say it like as if you're putting it out to the universe to heaven and once you've done that let it go let it completely go and come into this moment the only moment that really exists and you can do that by feeling your breath feeling the sensations in your body feeling the inner body listening to the external sounds if thoughts arise just notice let it go if your question comes back to you in your mind let it go the true answer cannot come if you are not the space even if different answers arise in the mind as thoughts just notice that

I could do this I could do that just notice them as thoughts the mind moves I am still be still being aware of all movement body mind sound let go of any expectations that you may have in receiving your answer in this moment for stillness knows no time when you received your answer that's the time breathing are you breathing feeling the breath feeling the inner body relaxing your body noticing everything and allowing everything to be as it is come into this moment with this breath there's the space sense into the space into the stillness letting go of any desire any wanting for the answer to appear the mind will grab at thoughts choose not to follow it the mind will become agitated sitting in stillness so you look at all the answers that come to you in your mind is only thought forms the true answer that comes will resonate throughout your entire being it may come as a thought form but it will bring you peace you will know it throughout your whole body that this is the realization that you need the answer you'll realize it to be the true answer to your question and it may come when you sit in meditation with it and it may come at some later moment the answer will come when you need it and sometimes we don't need it until we actually do but the mind will want it now you may need to have an answer by next week and the mind will say I need to know what it is now but you may not know it until the moment you walk through that door trust that it comes if you can be that open channel that crack and leave that space for a life to move through you speak through you answer through you then you are living and connected to stillness to truth itself so at any time you can open your eyes still staying connected and just being here in this moment because that's all there is I have done this meditation many many times and this is what I do when I need to know something no one answer to a question or concern that I have and I would sit there like you know you get really agitated when you just got to know you want to know is you just try to meditate and you're okay I'll meditate try to find the answer right and then it's like it's not enough I feel like you got to be doing something the mind feels like it's got to be doing something but if you can just sit there and allow even the mind to do its thing going through all the possible solutions the possible answers that you can get think that maybe this is the answer just watch this mind go by and it's it's a joke you begin to start laughing you go oh my god that's just a thought and there has been times and then when I see the illusion behind all these different thought forms that appear as some sort of answer to my question and I look at them and I can see that they are just simply a thought form suddenly it's like something burst and I receive an answer and there isn't how I know it to be an answer is that there is such a deep inner peace my whole body becomes alive and it resonates within my whole body and then I know that that's the answer now it has happened where I would receive the answer and then you know you kind of get up off your mat right or your chair and then you go about your day and then the mind will come in but what about this and what about that and start to confuse you again the mind will just start to confuse you again and you're going there oh yeah okay all right and then it's like wait a second whoa you're really cunning here aren't you mind because that's what the mind is so cunning it'll come through again and again and again but you see you what how you can tell is that it doesn't bring you peace it just brings you more confusion so go back to

the peace go back to the stillness and find that peace the answer is there and it's so peaceful the true answer gives you peace brings peace brings an aliveness in you a calm an assurance and then our only job is then to stay true to that assurance because the mind will come in every which way all the time and somebody else may come and say oh but there's this then oh no you should do that but it's just stay stay there sit right here so good luck and it has happened as well that I don't receive the answer while I'm sitting it may come a day a week and sometimes even a month later because sometimes we can't tell life what to do and what to give us in the instant in the moment that we want like you know our little children taking a tepid I want it now I want it now when really it's as Jesus said do not worry but you shall eat what you shall wear what you shall say for in the moment that you need it it is given and this is the spiritual life living in the complete unknown because we never know what will happen the next moment and you only need something when you need it that's all the mind will want it before way before perhaps even but the spiritual life is now this moment right now do I need to know the answer now to something that I have to give an answer to next week so I don't need to know now do I so it's not here the answer is not here ok fine there's so many times that I have to live in this trust this faith you can say and I won't know an answer until the moment that I walk into the room say I'm going to appointment I need the answer I'm like oh my gosh I don't know this what am I going to say I don't know and I may not even know when I walk in the room but when I sit down and then suddenly the question is posed to me and then you just say it just like wow there it is that's it everything that you need to know is within you everything does that mean that an answer cannot come from outside you know it doesn't mean that at all because ultimately there is no in or out it's all one however if the answer does come what we call say there will still be that inner peace that peace will be there and that's the key the peace that resonates through your whole body and you rest in that

[Speaker 1] (4:50:19 - 5:12:08)

somebody asks have you ever experienced the dark night of the soul your teachings have been so helpful through this difficult period can you address this subject the dark night of the soul is a term from goes back a long time maybe goes back to the Spanish mystic st. John of the cross I'm not sure if it does but it goes back a long time it describes something well the questioner seems to imply that he is he or she is going through something like this at the moment the dark night of the which yes I have also experienced that's a term then used to describe a what one could call a collapse of a perceived meaning in life an eruption into your life of a deep sense of meaninglessness and the the inner state in some cases is very close to depression maybe some dark night of the soul often to do with what is conventionally called depression but it is basically a sense of emptiness or meaninglessness nothing makes sense anymore there's no purpose to anything and sometimes it's triggered by some external event some disasters perhaps on an external level external rather than within the death of someone close to

you could trigger it especially premature death for example if your child dies or you had built up your life and given it meaning and the meaning that you had given your life this is what my life is about your activities your achievements where you're going what is considered important and the so the meaning that you had given your life for some reason collapses so as I said it can happen if something happens that you can't explain away anymore some disaster which seems to invalidate the meaning that your life had before and really was as what has collapsed then is the whole conceptual framework for your life the meaning that your mind had given it and so that results in a sense of darkness a dark place but people have gone into that you're in that dark place for a while and then you emerge out of that there is the possibility that you emerge out of that you can emerge out of that into a transformed state of consciousness where life has meaning again but it is no longer a conceptual meaning that you could necessarily explain it is often from the night of the soul not necessarily but quite often it's from there that people awaken out of their conceptual sense of reality which has collapsed they awaken into something deeper which is no longer based on concepts in your mind a deeper sense of purpose or connectedness with a greater life that is not dependent on explanations or anything conceptual any longer it's a kind of rebirth and the dark night of the soul is a kind of death that you die what dies in the dark night of the soul is the egoic sense of self and of course yes death is always painful but nothing has actually died there only an illusory identity now it is probably the case that some people who have gone through this transformation they have been through the dark night of the soul and they discovered that out of that a new self emerged that was a non-conceptual self but it a deeper being the awakened consciousness and they somehow looking back they realized that they had to go through that not everybody does of course have to go through that but some people do and they've even in some spiritual traditions they recreate they try to recreate the experience of the dark night of the soul in order to bring about a spiritual awakening and that was probably part of the so-called mystery schools of ancient Greece and Egypt which were designed they even survived into Roman times mystery schools and with rituals and so on not much we don't know much about it because they were kept secret not much was written about it and in one tradition you spend a prolonged period of time in darkness sometimes even in a coffin coffin like place in complete isolation and darkness that is an attempt I would say on the part of someone who has gone through the natural dark night of the soul to recreate the experience of it in the kind of artificial more artificial way of actually experience that the that utter darkness where things break down whether to what extent that works when it's not a natural experience but a created experience for how many people that worked and actually did bring about an awakening and a collapse of the mind made self I don't know how it whether it truly worked for many people but it must have worked to some extent because it's in the tradition went on for a very long time they are other in other forms of in mythological forms also they speak of similar things sometimes described as the the night journey in mythological tradition or also the descent to the underworld they all point to the same experience which is not ultimately negative it just seems negative

when you are in it but it is part of a larger purpose it's part of the awakening not for everyone it doesn't have to be but often it is part of the awakening process the death of the old self the birth of the true self so once you know that if it should come or if you should even be in the middle of it now you can just the more you surrender the more quickly you go through it surrender means don't judge it anymore you accept whatever it is that's your experience at this moment but as I said not everybody has to go through that for many people the awakening process starts and begins without that sometimes even after the awakening process begins it might still happen you and then finally you will break through but that's fine allow life to do what it does you don't need to seek that and we don't need to recreate it in some artificial way so don't just shut yourself in a dark room for days on end it's unlikely to work it's unnecessary the first lesson in the course in miracles says nothing I see in this room means anything and you're supposed to look around the room and whatever you look at happen to be looking at you say this that doesn't mean anything that doesn't mean anything this table doesn't mean anything this hand doesn't mean anything what's the purpose of a lesson like that well that's a little bit like recreating the what can happen during the dark night of the soul which is the collapse of a mind made meaning conceptual meaning of life believing that you understand what's it all about so with the course in miracles in lesson one it's a voluntary relinquishment of the human mind made meaning that is projected and you go voluntarily into saying I don't know what this means this doesn't mean anything you wipe the board clean in the dark night of the soul it collapses and in some spiritual traditions then you can actually you're encouraged to relinquish your conceptual reality and so you're then meant to arrive at a place of conceptual one could say meaninglessness or one could say a state of ignorance where you don't things lose their the meaning that you had given them which was all condition and cultural and so on and you can then look upon the world without imposing a mind made framework of meaning and it looks of course as if you were no longer understanding anything and that's why it's so scary when it happens to you instead of you actually consciously embracing it it's very can be very scary and can bring about the night of the soul the dark night of the soul to go around the universe without any longer interpreting it compulsively as an innocent presence and you look upon events people and so on with a deep sense of aliveness you sense the aliveness that's there through your own sense of aliveness but you're not trying to fit your experience into a conceptual framework anymore this is what people usually do those who are conditioned which is most not not not awakened yet whatever they experience they try to fit into some frame their conceptual framework where it fits in people events and they're given a certain value on have no value in their framework many people for example who are interested in practical matters that when they when they meet a human being who does not offer the promise of helping in their endeavor of where they want wanting to go to they have no interest whatsoever in that human being because he or she does not fit into what I consider important so there's no interest in that human being whatsoever because I can't use you for my egoic purposes that is not the conscious thought but that's the underlying assumption so you don't fit

into my framework of meaning I'm just just complete lack of interest in those humans who don't fit in and you can see then how limited that kind of life is egoically egoically conditioned meaning whatever does not fit in is excluded or is regarded even as an enemy because something might threaten my artificial meaning the mind created conceptual framework as would be the case of and let's say you are religious idea you are subscribed to some religious ideology and of course this anybody who questions that because and that is the conceptual framework that gives meaning to your life and from there you interpret everything as some people do whatever happens you have some kind of immediately some kind of explanation that is biblical or based on your some kind of other scripture and you immediately explain it this is right this is what it is let's see that's that that's that and somebody doesn't agree and then it could be oh yeah that's the the Antichrist or whatever and that's a very narrow world that people inhabit but it's a meaning it gives their life meaning no no that's a kind of pseudo meaning but it gives their life meaning but for true awakening to happen that needs to collapse so I invite you to relinquish that artificial projection of conceptual meaning and become the open awareness for life where you don't need to figure out in every moment where things or people fit into your framework of what's important or not important and so you move into the realm of freedom you give others freedom and you yourself become free you don't need to understand immediately every human being or what they are about so often I see people trying to interpret other people why they do what they do or what they really want what their real motivations are or whatever and a lot of the time it's a you're completely wrong but if you don't know that you take your judgments to be reality and then you act as if they were reality on the basis of that you then interact with that person and you have already assumed that your judgments were real and you create an entire delusion on the basis of erroneous judgments of others all that collapses it either collapses because you voluntarily go to a different place of openness of aware presence or it collapses for you when the time comes I would just like to thank

[Speaker 7] (5:12:08 - 5:12:56)

you for this morning's talk my mother died Friday died on Friday I was just thought it was so appropriate and the peace of mind that gave me with what you said this morning was fantastic but that wasn't my question the question I had was really related to with all the talks you give the retreats and and advice have you ever looked back and thought afterwards that man I wish it wouldn't have said that or boy goofed up there this this was a mistake thank you thank you well only the

[Speaker 1] (5:12:56 - 5:17:45)

Pope is infallible now that the teaching if we can even call it the teaching of course is not mainly based on information not primarily based on any kind of conveying of information or facts but on on its most fundamental level the teaching is awareness which is non-conceptual so that can't be wrong so on that on the most fundamental level nothing

could possibly be wrong because it is it transcends all concepts that's the essence of the teaching the moment you move into concepts the possibility of error of course arises but the first of all the first level of concepts that are used are concepts that point back to that which is beyond concepts and beyond thought so the concepts that I use in the teachings are concepts that are whose purpose is to point back to that which is beyond so and that also they can't be much wrong about that except that it could be that I used a pointer that perhaps was not the most appropriate one for a certain person or group of people that could happen if we but used again errors doesn't really apply here it just it might not be the best possible point I maybe I wake up in the middle of the night to say oh I could have said that that's maybe possible but usually it doesn't arise next level up occasionally I let information slip in about to illustrate certain things I might talk about something historical or might talk about some fact about something I read in the paper or whatever just as little illustrative stories and of course that's where things occasionally get wrong even in the power of now I wrote for example that 100 million people had been killed in the 20th century alone by other humans and I later realized that was the figure was much too low apparently it's quite a bit higher it's could be a hundred and forty million nobody knows exactly it's dreadfully high and so I got that wrong and and sometimes in talks I might something may come in a historical fact or something and later somebody tells me you got that wrong in one talk I talked about depressed anti-deport taking depressants antidepressants and I wasn't perhaps careful enough to emphasize that you should do this extremely slowly with the help of a conscious physician and so on and there was one or two physician in the audience you get up got upset and this is all wrong it's all wrong that's usually what happens is that the answer to a question or even the general talk always there's a correspondence between the questioner and the answer or when there's a talk there's a correspondence between the energy field in the room and what comes out and that's not decision based there's no there's nothing in my mind that says oh in this energy field I'll better talk about that because I don't know before the words come out what's going to come out so that doesn't apply and so it can happen though that a person asks a question and an answer comes and I later realized that the answer was not the deepest answer that I could have given but I do know that the answer that comes out reflects the degree of openness in the questioner usually and so if the answer is not that deep then the question wasn't that deep that seems to be often the case occasionally some deep answer comes even when the question is not deep but perhaps there's an intuitive realization then that it is possible to break through the surface layer.

[Speaker 7] (5:17:45 - 5:17:46)

Not this question though.

[Speaker 1] (5:17:46 - 5:17:48)

No your question was deep enough. Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (5:17:53 - 5:17:59)

Well I do want to say this morning was perfect you were right on thank you. Thank you Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (5:18:00 - 5:20:15)

So there's an ancient saying of course which you may have heard that just the teacher and the taught together produce the teaching so it's a two-way process it comes out of presence it doesn't really come out of a person it comes through the person who is empty enough spacious enough so that it can come through it's not off the person. So on the surface level then yes mistakes are quite possible on the most essential level no. I had a I knew a person many years ago I only knew her for about a year then she died she was a psychotherapist and she would sometimes come to see me I was still doing a private sessions then she would often come to see me once a week or so to ask questions and her questions were so wonderful like the deepest answers came with that person always and I said to her maybe we should record because your questions seem to be so draw out these wonderful answers and she agreed and then a little later she was too ill and she died and just before she in the months before she died she went through this shift where she didn't need to ask any more questions she went through complete presence shift surrender to what is and her body became virtually transparent and luminous and she was just there and then she didn't need to ask any more questions so it was too late for recording anything just the shift happened and the flowering happened and that was enough.

[Speaker 7] (5:20:17 - 5:20:17)

Well thank you.

[Speaker 8] (5:20:18 - 5:21:07)

Hi, with consciousness many understanding arises in you how can we say that there is only consciousness everywhere and consciousness disguising as form?

[Speaker 1] (5:21:08 - 5:24:18)

Yes. How can we make that statement that there is only consciousness? You can only make it from your own realization it's not a statement that from an external or scientific scientific viewpoint could be shown to be true science doesn't even know about consciousness and most science even denies the existence of consciousness so if you take the scientific approach you won't get anywhere you'll just be stuck there it is based on real your own realization and here most people who are here are drawn here because they already have at the very least glimpses of it and the glimpse that you have of the truth that there's only consciousness which comes from inner realization it may not be a full realization but a glimpse and it is the glimpse that draws you here and there may be

one or two people who are drawn here out of curiosity they think it's an intellectual event but of course if you think it's an intellectual event then it's you're not going to be very happy sitting here now whether you got drawn here by intellectual curiosity or by something that you cannot quite define inside yourself that drew you here only you can know that but if you're still here perhaps that means there's more than just intellectual that there may be a strong element of intellectual curiosity but it may be because you have not haven't walked out yet what you will in a little while but everybody's going to walk out there still there's something in you and don't rely always on your mind to immediately know the answers that's your mind is fine for many things but not for that don't rely on your mind rely sense whether there's something in here that response to what is being said and to risk that response to the energy field here that you cannot conceptualize you need soil you need a little bit of humility for that from intellectual point of view to accept that there is something in you that you cannot at least right now you cannot conceptualize and understand analytically so if you feel that this is why you're still here there's some obscure knowing some some sensing that there's something there you perhaps you feel a little bit more alive as you sit here maybe not maybe you true effort of the will you endured the time here and felt that you were not getting getting the real answers that you wanted but it's possible to only you can know that no I understand that when you say

[Speaker 8] (5:24:18 - 5:24:32)

that there is consciousness only I understand that and I feel the consciousness good and my question was how can we say that there is only consciousness the field of consciousness is what

[Speaker 1] (5:24:32 - 5:25:45)

is ultimately existing I can everywhere yes it's sensing when you no longer conceptualize the world continuously there's a stillness that underlies your perceptions and when there's a stillness that underlies your perceptions you sense and that essence that is the stillness that is in you you sense that essence in everything it's a mystical statement you cannot understand it intellectually you sense it in the flower it's almost like a self-recognition I find my essence in the flower I even find it in the water I even find it in so-called inanimate objects they have beingness and a presence that I recognize and therefore I say whether I look at the Sun or the moon or the tree or the bird that I see myself I sense myself in that when I don't conceptualize

[Speaker 3] (5:25:45 - 5:26:21)

them thank you thank you my question is about confirming consciousness if if you look at the world a world of form as all illusory and impermanent and yet we can confirm that by

[Speaker 15] (5:26:21 - 5:26:27)

witnessing its constant change or its constant impermanence or the cycles that it goes through

[Speaker 3] (5:26:27 - 5:27:06)

and yet true reality is consciousness the background or the substratum of all of the true existence that is out there how do we confirm Leona asks how can I become less fearful and

[Speaker 1] (5:27:06 - 5:43:27)

reactive and stay present when I'm facing a serious surgery that will determine whether I recover or not so when there's something like that happens there is a critical situation approaching perhaps even mortality you can go either one way or the other you can go into increasing fear or you can go into intensified presence increasing fear means if the imminent event would cause the mind to think even more than it does usually fearful thoughts creating the emotions that correspond to those thoughts I may die and a spiral of unconsciousness but an event like that is a great opportunity for allowing it allowing that event to push you into intensified presence because what else can you do unless you want to suffer you go into thought if you want to be free of suffering an event of that kind has the potential of providing enormous motivation for not leaving the present moment because if you leave the present moment you start to suffer so it can be a wonderful thing and I've met quite a few people who have been able to practice that people who have contracted cancer or AIDS and other illnesses that are potentially lethal then of course we all have an illness that's lethal we are all already infected with mortality it's the body so really we should all be doing it and it's an emergency situation we're in allow it to push you into presence where you don't we are so absolutely here that no I'm not going anywhere from here I know there's an operation waiting for me let's say in a week's time or tomorrow but I'm not I'm not leaving this moment I'm just staying with my attention just focused just on this I can feel my energy field I'm present with what is I'm not leaving now just and you become very simple so what happens then is the scroll of your life let's say yet life you know the ancient scrolls here they didn't have books they had scrolls on the roll sometimes on two rolls so you have on the left your past on the right your future so you go with a scroll of your life usually what people are interested in about their lives is they they could have continuous reference to let's read what happened in the past so they're thinking about the past so you read the left-hand side of the scroll oh isn't it awful oh what he did never forget that she betrayed me just think let's see what else said oh no that too or or something great or wasn't that a good time well where is it all now it's all gone it's all gone and all you only look on the right-hand side that where there's scribbles which are very hard to decipher it's about the future so they're very almost illegible I wonder what that means does it mean I'm

dying or is that and of course if you go fine I'm on the scroll you will meet your death somewhere it says dead so of course you don't want to go that far so you keep it a little bit less away from that and then you try to decipher the future which is very fearful because you just can't make out what exactly it says on there and so most people live like that their attention continues from being drawn between these two and they miss the central panel here which has no writing on it the writing is all there and so an event like this great opportunity because if you start continue reading the scroll you'll become nostalgic and so on about the past it was all the I'm going to lose it all my memories I'm my total or the future is even worse you roll it up down to central panel well no writing or maybe just maybe there's just the sunlight shining through the papyrus or whatever it's made of oh so that's when an event like that happens then it should provide enough motivation to roll it down to just that so that you refuse to go there and you refuse to go there with your attention you just hear and that very quickly burns up unconsciousness in you it burns up the entire structure of the ego which lives through constant reference to past and future it burns all the false self gets burned up in that quickly and if you stay in it then you will quickly notice the inner transformation that happens the first thing you notice that you become alive inside and you feel an energy coming through every cell of the body almost like light and there's no fear and so I've seen people becoming transformed in that way who some of them knew they were going to die well soon and even if it doesn't happen it may not happen when the doctor tells you you have one more month to live he may be wrong Stephen Hawking was told when I was at university he was there that was when whenever it was 30 years ago more he was told you have five more years now more than 30 years have passed he's still there but no matter whether eventually you die anyway so that doesn't really matter the question is whether you have realized who you are beyond the form of you and you can only do that by staying in the central panel I'm using this image inspired by a vision or a dream that the woman who took down so to speak cause in miracles that was dictated to her by an inner voice and she had some visions before the whole process happened and in one of her visions or dreams she found in an old box very ancient an ancient scroll and she took it out and she unrolled it and the voice was saying to her if you look on the left you will know the past if you look on the right you will know the future and in this vision or in this dream she rolled it up to just the central panel and said I'm not interested oh in the she went rolled up to the central panel and on the central panel it said God is and they said that's all I'm interested in she didn't want to know past and future and in that moment the voice said that was before the whole thing happened the process of dictation the voice said congratulations you made it this time God is that's all you need to know really and God is in everything and in everyone the light of consciousness consciousness assuming forms so should an event like that happen to you it's a wonderful opportunity for going you can also do it if there's a crisis situation of a different kind in your life big problems go okay you're still capable of action if action is necessary but you're not leaving this it's an incredibly wonderful some people often get letters from people in prison and some of them are they know they're going to be in either for the rest of their

lives or another 20 years and they are practicing that and they have quite a few of them have found the end of suffering by doing refusing to leave the present moment your entire karma gets eroded through that intent it gets burned up in intense presence so what is why does it work so powerfully because in that intense presence you know yourself as the formless presence your entire identity shifts from form to formlessness and that so the beauty of it that's how it works and that's the then the end of death I believe that happened through it was triggered in the case of Don Miguel Ruiz the four agreements also it was triggered by a car accident he had when he fell asleep at the wheel of his car and then he woke up and as he woke up there was four or five seconds left before he hit a concrete wall so he go and then he saw his body from somewhere else so that was his first death was not complete death but virtual death but when you leave when you refuse to go to past and future with your attention unless that you need some reference point it's fine to go to the past to remember your phone number or something okay or the future because you need to tomorrow I need to do this that's fine make a note of it that's the future and then it's gone that's all the intensity of the Zen masters that's what it is it's nothing else they are simply refusing to leave the present moment that's that brings the intensity when you see ancient drawings of Zen masters in the good ones they all has a have this fierce look about them if the drawings are very good underneath the fierceness there's also a softness but on the outside they see not I'm not leaving this moment and that's their whole power is is that no absolutely Zen has no conceptualization about it whatsoever a little bit over the centuries did accumulate later but originally Zen was to do away with all conceptualizations it was a total renewal of Buddhism when Buddhism had already become heavily burdened with conceptualization and philosophy Zen arose to rediscover the core of Buddhism which had already been covered up and what is direct experience direct realization that is the aim with no reference to even to any scriptures originally they would burn this no just and of course over the centuries then gradually there were quite a few people who didn't quite achieve the realization and they added a bit more structure to it and even some writings so and the their practices which are very simple just always designed to bring you into them into the now to force you into the now they became some a little bit ritualistic but originally it's the most beautiful the most beautiful teaching teaching because it's it's basically contentless and this is why so few people get it even in Japan it doesn't mean you're any better off if you're Japanese even they just also Zen was also designed to break through all the conditioned ways of behavior which were quite pronounced in Japan especially very conditioned ways in which people behave break through all that all the conventions all that breakthrough and just that the most incredible wonderful teaching but Zen is here now it's here now this is Zen because Zen has no content and this doesn't have much content does it?

[Speaker 9] (5:43:51 - 5:44:45)

Hi Eckhart, I have a sibling who is struggling with paranoid thoughts and delusions and

he doesn't think there's anything wrong so he doesn't want help he's kind of in a position where something's gonna happen to him soon it's gonna harm himself or harm someone else I'm sort of dealing with the world of form around him and a bunch of systems and I feel like I'm kind of missing him as a person and I want to know what I could do if there's anything I can do to help him.

[Speaker 1] (5:44:59 - 6:02:56)

Perhaps this answer also has two parts the I have a little bit of personal experience because I also had a close relative who suffered from what is usually called paranoia which is a I see it as just an intensification of normal egoic state becomes much more intense so that you see that it's actually madness form of madness it begins in normal egoic status suspecting other people's motives what does he really want of me often projecting negative intentions onto other people when they aren't there at all looking suspiciously at strangers that you meet suspicious about why you are honest these are still considered quite normal and I could see that because this person for that I my relative I observed her for a few years when she was still considered normal but I already was aware of they have very strong ego always suspecting others of not being honest and so on there was always that looking out but that was quite normal many people have that they're just distrustful of life and other people and then after a few years I was no longer living there but I real I came from it and realized by then she had gone further and had actually already been taken to a mental home and then come out again and then had very strong delusions total misinterpretations of life around her of other people seeing having huge long stories about plots against her and accusing people in the street of following her and all kinds of things very weird and then as I whenever I visited then I would be with her and whenever I saw her I could feel myself going into an intensified state of presence whenever I was with her and she was telling me about what was going on mostly fantasies and I could see the enormous amount of fear that was the basis of her state there was so much fear in her that she didn't know she couldn't she had her mind and this I believe is the basis of especially what is called paranoia which always sees a threat somewhere the her mind attempted to interpret the fear that she felt which comes from the state of disconnectedness from being the state of ego and the mind attempting to understand and explain this fear had to find some explanation for it so it created some external explanation because it needed to explain it this is by the way also how a dream many dreams happen in that way we believe often that the dream let's say we dreaming of some monster is trying to devour us and we're in panic we believe that the dream causes the panic but in many cases perhaps all cases the feeling causes the dream the feeling of intense fear goes into the mind and the mind attempts to create images that explain the already present feeling of fear and the at the minds in attempt to create the images that correspond to the feeling creates the dream and so that happens in a dream and that can also happen in paranoia and by the way that is also in so-called normal consciousness an element of that is present also in normal

consciousness of attempting explanations for bad feelings instead of facing the feelings directly trying to find some explanation of why I feel this so something you can do it's not actually a doing is to just listen to him in intense presence so that there mustn't be a single thought in your head especially not a single emotion because if there's an emotion in you his his heavy emotional this heavy emotional entity will get in there immediately and grab onto the emotion and once more of that especially any reaction or deny what he is saying of course the moment you deny something you become part of it so that all that doesn't work nor do you need to agree to simply total openness and then I have I experienced several times while I was with her her state of mind changed and became totally peaceful and delusions subsided and as long as I was there absolutely present the delusions were gone the moment I left a few hours later they came back so whether you can if you spent I was there fairly rarely if you spend more time with him if you can bring intense presence into your interaction with him your relationship with him that may be a help because it could awaken that awareness in him if he can see that there is something that is if he can see that there's something that is delusional even in a moment of a glimpse of lucidity then perhaps the awareness can grow slowly slowly grow in him there's no guarantee but it's something that is a beautiful thing to do if you want to call it doing it's good for you and it's good for him second part of the answer is you also have to and it's not easy but in some cases you need to allow other humans to go through their karmic suffering if this you do what you can and there's always a limit to what you can do and beyond that there needs to come an acceptance it's the same kind of acceptance that you would practice in your own if something were happening to you something difficult to bear what used to be called in medieval Christianity they called it the cross you have to bear your own everybody has their cross and in some people's crosses are very heavy so you can bring complete acceptance and this applies to not to you it applies to sometimes parents who can see that their teenage sons or daughters are doing dangerous and mad things they do all they can but there's a limit you can't put them into prison you can't lock the door so there's a limit to what you can do beyond that there needs to come to break an acceptance of humans have every human has his or her own learning process and they enormous differences in the way in which humans learn and grow so you also may have to do it with your parents if you are your parents may be deeply in the grip of ego they may be they may disapprove of who you are they may all again acceptance all have their own learning process it's particularly hard if you see somebody close to you you can see they are making dreadful mistakes but and you can see that they're going to suffer through that but it's also true that making mistakes is the one of the most important things that a human being can do in their growth without making mistakes nothing much would happen creating conflict something must go wrong in your life as you know without something going wrong there's no movie you can't watch a movie and nothing goes wrong who would want to see that so by my life I mean every movie you see it really the very if you go to the very down to the very basics of the movies means well there are these people and then something goes wrong otherwise nobody would pay money to watch something not going wrong and so it's life

in its present evolutionary state is similar although we are moving out of that but many humans are still in that and it's the wrong is not wrong it's just we call it wrong and there comes a deepening through suffering and to learning so we don't know what his path is it but I would suggest that you when you ever you are with him you make it into very intense presence that's the most beautiful gift you can give him is the gift of your presence and the gift of your presence may draw forth his presence also but that's not the main thing it's just you you're just offering the gift from John in Oxford not in England but in the United States am I Michigan yeah with my mindfulness practice there seems to be an awareness of moods thoughts emotions body states etc in other words aware of the experience of samsara yet I long for the inner peace of Nirvana a state which I only understand intellectually how can I transform the intellectualizing into experience I know that the only moment is now I know that there's nothing to do yet even a taste of stillness seems to elude me me in quotation marks so perhaps the answer is in the question somewhere let's have a look I'm looking for the answer now with my mindfulness practice there seems to be an awareness of moods thoughts emotions body states etc in other words aware of the experience of samsara's the wheel of becoming whatever okay I think there's the answer there's an awareness of moods thoughts emotions body states and so on which means there's awareness now all you have to find the awareness that is aware of thoughts emotions body states moods and so on because you're saying yourself that the awareness is there and so you're still you're looking for something that's already there where is the actual experience you're just intellectualizing never know the experience is already there but you don't know it the awareness of moods means just become aware that there is an awareness with which you are aware of the moods and the body and the various states that's Nirvana so it's not it's not something that needs to be brought about from somewhere pulled out of the hat yeah you have it already so you've already answered your question there is an awareness you overlooked it because the seductive nature of the world of form it every form says give me attention so one continuously overlooks the attention itself because attention continuously flows into something into a thought or into an experience or into a perception it the awareness flows continuously into some form another way you can put it the awareness is continuously reborn into some new form it becomes a thought and experience a sense perception a situation again you're completely in it so the that's called reincarnation the you're reincarnating continuously into identification with one form after another and who are you who is the reincarnating entity well it's not an entity at all it's the formless consciousness and so because of the seductive nature of form you overlook the very life blood of all form which is the awareness the consciousness it's it's very subtle but it's all pervasive and so people spend their whole lives looking for Nirvana or enlightenment or liberation whatever they call it looking for it as if it were some kind of event or experience that they need to encounter thunder lightning whatever it may be it's not it's already it's already here you're just continuously overlooking the essence of life because of the compulsive nature of of reincarnation every minute reincarnation happens every minute so just a slight redirecting of attention

instead of attention into form be aware that there is an awareness isn't there an awareness you said it yourself so how do you know that well you know that because you're aware of something now if that disappears what's left that's where death comes in if something disappears what's left awareness so take something throw it away first identify with it then throw it away and then you're left with awareness buy an expensive item like whatever that your ego can identify with it a big golden ring or whatever and wait for a year and show it around everybody so I can see you can afford that expensive jewelry and once you have completely identified with it take it off throw it into the river and then see what's left I have a question about children

[Speaker 11] (6:02:56 - 6:03:38)

I did a lot of spiritual work on myself before I had children and now I realize that I've transferred all of my fear of death and need for security onto my children and I don't know what to do about it I don't know what the best course of action is because I realized that it's part of taking care of them is to protect them but on the other hand kind of it goes against you know being present and being in presence and definitely brings on anxiety and wanting to control situations

[Speaker 1] (6:03:38 - 6:03:50)

and do you over protect or how does it manifest in actual daily life well my children are

[Speaker 11] (6:03:50 - 6:04:41)

unusual in that they had they both have special health problems so they involved both my husband and I a great deal in caring for their health at a time when it was really important but now we give them the same amount of attention even though for the most part they're okay you know so it's kind of like we got into that a pattern of putting all of our energy into them and it's continuing but I I'm not sure where to let go and where to hold on yes thank you thank you yes certain behaviors once

[Speaker 1] (6:04:41 - 6:18:24)

they are in place have a certain momentum and they kind of take you over almost especially then if it happens between two people or an even larger group behavior pattern becomes it can become an energy stream that God takes you over you can have it for example in when there are riots or whatever sometimes they go on for days because the people who participate in the riots nothing to do with you of course just a similar same phenomenon on a larger scale the phenomenon of people being in the grip of a certain behavior pattern which is an energy stream and so they are not doing it they are in the grip of it nobody's doing it so that can even happen here's a certain kind of behavior behavior becomes initiated and then refuses to go away similar phenomenon would be to when you are in a certain in a certain state you don't want to get out of that

state children for example many children sets a simple very simple example and even adults even when they're tired they don't want to go to bed because somehow there's always something else because the the state of being awake wants to continue despite the tiredness but once you're in bed and asleep you don't want to get out of bed in the morning because then that momentum wants to continue or the child doesn't want to go into the bath or the shower because the it doesn't want to change its state from dryness to wetness once you're in the bath you don't want to get out because it's so nice so there's certain energies that want to sustain themselves and behavior patterns can be like that so the the essential thing then for you is to have spaces of awareness during the day from where you can be aware of whatever behavior you're manifesting at that moment so that you're not totally controlled by the old pattern and this is why it's so essential to have to bring to have your daily life your day interspersed with what I call spaces this is just another way of saying step out of your life situation which is in time past and future and mind and step into the into the present moment and become so a little space opens up inside that's the space of awareness from the awareness you can see the energy behind an old pattern of behavior that and this pattern either makes you think a certain thought or it immediately goes into action as it makes you do something and so you can sometimes then feel the arising behavior before it manifests as an action you can feel the impulse to go there and do this protective thing to the child or was quite unnecessary it's no longer no longer needed so you can feel the impulse arising and recognizing it as an old impulse but only from the space of awareness and then cancer you can you don't need to act on it you think oh there's the old impulse and on it it goes the impulse is there arises and then subsides or if thought comes in some compulsive thought about your child that also from that space of awareness that inner space of aware presence the stillness another word for it from this from the stillness you observe the thought that wants to push itself is pushing itself into your mind you have to think this now and say okay there it is and you allow it you don't fight it because whatever you fight you make stronger but so you are not in the grip of it anymore so most but more aware spaces vital with all children to to bring spatial consciousness as I sometimes call it or space consciousness nothing to do with science fiction to bring space consciousness into the relationship with your child for example it's essential not to always relate to your child from the point of view of doing do this don't do that now we need to do that now let's do that don't do that don't go there go there but to relate to your child or that that has its place of course but if that's all there is then it's it's a very one-dimensional relationship because what is missing is being what is missing is the child is to to to bring the spaciousness into the relationship where you can just be with a child and look at the child and listen to the child and be there as the aware presence for the child and so you're not you don't want the child to do this or that you're just there with a child and observing watching listening being giving attention that's a beautiful thing and that's beyond any pattern that's not a inherited pattern its presence presence is not an old pattern it's eternally new it's timeless so most parents don't know that yet they cannot bring the timeless dimension into the relationship with their child and so the relationship

becomes full of conflict eventually even you have the best of intentions and yet then the child grows and then you suddenly the child is reactive and you don't know why and there's conflict the reason is that the most vital dimension is missing you've done all you could but doing wasn't enough doing is necessary but it's not enough being was neglected so being means to bring the aware spaces into the relationship we're doing doesn't matter so much when doing can still happen within it but that's vital and of course not only into the relationship with your child but also bring it into every relationship no relationship can thrive if there is no spaciousness in it and the spaciousness is there when you look at the other person and there's no thought in your head while you look because you're simply there as an aware presence then there's a true relationship beyond the forms the psychological form and the physical form if you can look at another person and just be there as the aware presence with no thought just an alert presence that's what I call that is space if you can't do it with another human being start by doing it with a flower but I know you can if you can't do it with another human being do it with a dog it might be a little bit easier to be the aware space with a dog because the dog is already free of thought so the dog does not stimulate thought in you as a human being would do who is the other person is probably thinking and you are so that transmits itself it's contagious every state transmits itself so you might be dragged into thinking also so to have that no thought in any relationship is vital it's vital for your children so that old patterns cease to operate and then the new can come in and you can then from that state of consciousness you can respond to the need of the child but it's no longer responding from a pattern that is no longer useful from the aware space you also know what is right for any given moment whether you need to allow the child to explore for example or whether you need to say come away from there because there's a 50 meter drop you might fall so there's always a balance between allowing the child to find out for him or herself and to protect the child and say no come here very subtle balance but it's much easier from awareness to know where the balance is and to do the right thing from there so your entire life then it's not just that so the question has wider implications not just to do with your child but the spaciousness needs to be there inside yourself wherever you go if you go into nature without spaciousness you're not you're hardly there because you're thinking while you're surrounded by beauty and aliveness you're thinking now you're either thinking about you and yourself and your problems and you're only aware of the forest or the or the seaside or the mountains or the clouds or the wind and the breeze and the noise beautiful noises of nature on the periphery of your awareness because you're thinking about your failed investments or a little bit better you might be thinking about what you're looking at oh I wonder what that's called what's that I can't remember what that's called I have to look it up you're not fully present either you're maybe a little bit more present than the person is totally away but not much more because you're still trapped in concepts in your mind can you be there simply a spacious awareness like a little child but deeper more intense be there can you be anywhere as spacious awareness rather than a person that's the new state of consciousness that's arising can I be here as spacious awareness with anybody of course

as I said probably a little easier with a dog or a cat because you can meet the dog or the cat in the state of no thought the dog has no thought because it hasn't arrived at thought yet it's intelligent but it's not has no conceptual thinking the dog hasn't arrived at conceptual thinking it's below conceptual thinking and you have gone beyond conceptual thinking into the spaciousness and there you in this place in the immediate in no mind it's why it's so beautiful to relate to an animal and why so many people feel drawn to animals these days because it's the only time they can be free of their conceptual mind when they look at the patch the dog or the cat nothing to think about and you know the dog or cat is not thinking about you they're looking at you no thought it doesn't mean that you have regressed it means you for you you've gone beyond thinking stepped above thinking and then you can meet the entire dimension that is below thinking in a wonderful state of oneness the oneness that you sense with the all nature that's around you if you're in conceptual thinking you're separated you meet everything because when you're not thinking about the tree and the bird and the breeze and the insect and this there is no me and them there's a there's a single phenomenon the forms arising in consciousness and so you're like God that says and God saw what he she it had made and and recognize it as good the consciousness that out of which the whole universe came you represent that when you're in the state of no thought you represent the ground of being of all being and you walk around nature and you say if you had a thought it would say oh I did a good thing there and you see that even in the tension between opposites even that there's a deeper good beyond that yes occasionally one thing eats up another but there is a greater harmony that envelops the whole you cannot sense that harmony when you're trapped in conceptual thinking so next time you can tell me how it's going with your children it's a spiritual practice like everything else it becomes a spiritual practice

[Speaker 6] (6:18:34 - 6:19:13)

I understand there's probably only one answer to this question like so many that will be asked how can a movement that is so inwardly focused demonstrate political power in the same way that some corporate interests and evangelical interests have done so I think much to the detriment of our political process I didn't quite understand can you just repeat again how can a an inwardly focused movement inwardly focused movement demonstrate political power to beneficial

[Speaker 1] (6:19:13 - 6:19:25)

effect instead of this is a thank you this is a question for Marianne how did the Indians get

[Speaker 3] (6:19:25 - 6:23:05)

the British to leave what was Gandhi's movement of non-violence if not an inwardly focused movement Martin Luther King went to India he studied the principles of non-

violence and he brought those principles back for application in the civil rights movement struggle for civil rights in the United States during the 1960s please forgive me for my some level of ignorance about about Canada's history but most of our countries have had pretty much the same trajectories of places where there were levels of injustice that moved to justice if you looked at the abolitionist movement in the United States all the power when you were just talking about the corporate power the abolitionists didn't even have cell phones they had no computers they had no way of connecting the economic power behind slavery the institution of slavery in the United States in the southern states of the United States at that time was the equivalent of corporate power today but they had a better idea they had what was ultimately a more life-sustaining idea that's the power of that line that Martin Luther King used to quote the the arc of justice is law the moral arc of the universe is long but it bends towards justice because ultimately if you stand on something which is which is life sustaining freedom and liberty and and and and fairness for you for you for life for life in all its forms then you have what Martin Luther King called cosmic companionship this is what is the the symbol of the Christ child in front of the three kings they bowed to him when you are in the presence ultimately no amount of money no amount of corporate power no amount of governmental power none of those external powers which are false anyway will ultimately stand for all the reasons we were talking about earlier they they are powers of an illusionary world and when we recognize as Martin Luther King said there is a power in us more powerful than the presence of bullets in the presence that Eckert so eloquently describes as we is there is a collective field of presence which is what the Indian non-movement nonviolent movement was it was a collective field of presence led by Gandhi a collective field of presence led by Martin Luther King in the United States then ultimately all all powers of form will fall in the presence of light the course of miracles defines light as understanding and in the presence of light darkness cannot be we need to be and also the course in miracle says faith there is no such thing as a faithless person faith is an aspect of consciousness but we tend to have more faith in the power of the disaster than we have faith in the power of presence we have too much faith in corporate power we need to have more faith in the power of presence the power of love which is not saying that all corporate power is bad by the way but corporate dominance so I think sometimes political activists today are disturbed by an ignorance of history because if you want to see political miracles we've already had them from suffrage to the abolition of slavery and to to many examples yes it's not like it's

[Speaker 1] (6:23:05 - 6:31:41)

not like well it's never happened thank you thank you how can one teach children the rules that we follow in society such as manners and appropriate behavior and set limits and consequences while also allowing them to be create and express themselves yes that's a balancing act finding the balance between allowing them to do and be and setting boundaries which is also necessary so that they don't become a danger to

themselves and others for example or so that they don't become a nuisance to others and traditionally of course boundaries that people set for children were far too rigid and narrow in past times nowadays people seem to have gone in many cases to the opposite extreme where children have no boundaries whatsoever and they are not happy with that they're just as unhappy with no boundaries as they are with excessive boundaries so it requires wisdom to know how much space you can give them allow them to unfold in and even behavior how much you need to protect them from possible danger and at the same time not go so far as to remove their desire to explore the world it requires wisdom I saw a school I go past every day when I take the dog for a walk they had before the beginning of the long vacation period they had a big notice board outside and it said goodbye so something see you in September or whenever it is and then it's underneath it said in big letters be safe and I thought well yes it's good but it's a little bit one-sided too if the emphasis on being is on being safe then I imagined a girl or boy coming back after the vacation and the teacher asked well what did you do and the boy or girl says oh well I was really safe never left my room I was just totally safe at a great time safety of course is good to pursue but not even that you can't pursue safety as the ultimate aim in life it's a question of balance risk is part of life too the important thing is when you boundaries and of course boundaries need to be consistent not to set boundaries as a reaction to something that they do and then the boundaries are contaminated with negative energy the boundaries need to be peaceful boundaries firm but peaceful not reactive boundaries and so the important thing of course is that the you are there as a consistently peaceful energy energy field for them in the background of their lives you are there as the the aware presence and this is similar to even with a dog you have to do that as when I had the conversation with Caesar Milan the dog whisperer he was explaining that what really matters is your state of consciousness with the dog and you need you need to be the still point the point that is rooted in stillness or presence and then the dog will respond to that and of course every living being will respond to that only you can know in any particular case where the balance lies between exploration or even risk somewhat risky behavior and the necessary precautions that you need to take whatever you do the underlying state of consciousness is that which transmits itself most it's not so much what you do with a child but who you are with a child boundaries need to be consistent so remember that and not as a reaction to something when you see the child indulging in dangerous behavior that that must be stopped it's important to stop it but not in reactive fear as I often observe parents do the children the child does something and that immediately the parent reacts and screams at them yes you never go there again do you hear me you must go there again do you hear me and the child is traumatized it's a it's a dreadful assault on the child was only fear of course on the part of the parent and so the reaction was motivated by fear but the parent doesn't realize how traumatizing such an energetic assault on a child actually is it leaves it's like a it can leave us permanent scar in a child to be screamed at in anger by a parent so that is when you need to when you stop behavior on the child that can that is potentially very dangerous it needs to be done in absolute presence and firmness not the not the

fear reaction and then you don't create trauma in the child it's almost as bad as having an accident presence and then explain family you must not go there because that that and totally

[Speaker 9] (6:31:41 - 6:33:09)

different the more I choose to be present and the more I live my life like that the more I notice the people around me and I need to figure out a way to convey this message to them without preaching without handing the book out you know to everyone I know yes my dad happens to be great living in consciousness but he's really one of the only ones that I see on a regular basis which regular being every six months that I can sort of relate to yes and my friends are wonderful but they need to know what I know and I need an accurate way to convey the message have you tried anything yes and and sometimes I find myself getting exhausted because sometimes I feel like I'm going around and around so you try to explain I do and in their ways of explaining it but I'm just wondering from you if there's okay almost like a way to sum it up without sounding

[Speaker 1] (6:33:09 - 6:46:08)

preachy okay good question thank you well it's good that your dad is open to it so you have him I often hear of people who give copies of the book to relatives or friends and sometimes the relative or the friend says oh I'm eternally grateful to you because it changed my life and if you hadn't given it to me perhaps I would have suffered for another 10 or 15 years before I discovered it so I'm eternally grateful and then there are other friends or relatives who say what is this book that you gave me it made no sense at all and and so you can get the two responses sometimes if people are open and it's hard to predict who is going to be open sometimes the most unlikely people are open to this and vice versa sometimes people who think well this person has been going to church every Sunday and considers him or herself to be quite religious or spiritual he or she must be open to this and you may find it's completely rejected what you say or the book so it's hard to predict sometimes people tell me they are disappointed when a close relative or friend says why are you reading these things it's just completely meaningless to me and so there's a natural desire in you in in everybody who in whom the awakening the awakening process happens for other people to also receive that message the wisest thing is to first of all not necessarily convey attempt to convey this message in words unless a true question is being asked and that's an indication you can give the book that's fine and if they read it it's fine if they don't read it if it touches them if it doesn't they'll put it on a shelf and perhaps ten years later they pick it up and this also has happened some people have written to me it says I got your book years ago and I didn't make sense at the time and then something happened in my life and then just at the right moment I picked it up again and suddenly every page is deeply meaningful so I've had letters like that so it's fine giving the book is fine the book will either be received or it will not be received but talking to people about it can be difficult if I wouldn't even

recommend it unless it arises out of a particular situation where the situation is telling you this may be the moment to mention something or the person may be asking a genuine question what is this all about or somebody may notice a change in you some other people by the way as you may know you could change into the most the world's most enlightened being and some close relatives may never see it that's another matter because because they have a memory in their mind of who you are and they no longer see you they see their preconception of who you are so they wouldn't notice any change but other people may notice it and so if they notice a change and if a true question is asked the the wonderful thing is when when spontaneously you begin to speak about it when that comes of power into what you say but it only happens if the other that you are speaking to is open and the words are being received then this initiates the magical process whereby a spiritual teaching arises so at that moment when it happens a true question is being asked not a superficial question or question that implies that the questioner is really doesn't believe in all that nonsense a true question is a question when the other really wants to know the answer a simple question it could be what you seem to have changed for example if the person does perceive that you have changed what happened wise or you and or something about a problem that they have that they some form of suffering in their lives and for some reason they begin to ask you for advice or start talking to you about it and then the moment comes where either a question is being asked that's a true question or out of the situation you realize this is perhaps this is the moment and you find yourself saying something and then the words are being received and then that's an magical process when suddenly you become at that moment you become a spiritual teacher for that person it means doesn't mean it becomes your ultimate identity it's not at that moment your function is to convey consciousness consciousness speaks through you and you will feel only when it's being received by the other does the power come through you if it's not being being received by the other you will make an effort to talk it becomes frustrated and you can't even find the right words anymore and then you are frustrated and the other person is frustrated and that's the end of it so it's waiting either for the open question the truly genuine question a live question or waiting for the the situation to tell you that this is and then it's spontaneously you find yourself saying something and with that you also there's deepening happens in you as you begin to teach another who is open and it may not necessarily even be a relative it could be a friend or it could be somebody you meet accidentally when you in a waiting room or wherever you are and then the power moves through you and deepening happens in you because as you teach you learn you teach you learn but it may well be that people around you the situation does not yet arise and no true question is being asked and then it's only frustrating to attempt to teach people who are not ready or in a situation that is not right yet in that case it would be better to keep as the Buddha put it to keep noble silence and instead of trying to explain something you simply live the teaching and for the time being that implies here you accept the other person as they are in that moment and you represent the presence there there is also such a thing as a wordless or silent teaching that happens whenever

you are present in any situation and so that's the other way in which teaching can happen through you not necessarily through words because they may not be ready to hear the words but it can be there whenever you completely accept the other the way they are right now you don't demand that they should be more open you don't demand that they should understand you you don't demand that they shouldn't generate all these problems for themselves that they do and you can see this happens so you need to be in tune to see whether the situation is right for words either because of the right question is being asked or the situation is right or whether the situation is not right for you to say anything but you can still practice being present and that's also is a teaching and that is a teaching that does not does bypass this or goes through the ego in the other person presence seeps through the ego whereas if you use words it can easily create in a person who is not ready egoic resistance and then you get into a discussion and nothing good comes of that the other person just gets more entrenched in their point of view or their mental position so you need to be just patient the situation will tell you whether it is appropriate for you to actually speak words or whether just being being there as the presence is enough in that situation maybe the person can't take any more at that point and some people that you know may never be ready as long as you know them that's not everybody is ready yet and it is possible that some people as you go through the awakening process some people some friends may drift out of your life after a few years if nothing no change happens in them relatives may stay in your life for the simple fact that they are relatives so you still you go to Thanksgiving dinners and you meet them and you listen to them year after year perhaps telling the same stories I find that sometimes people one aspect of the teaching that is sometimes people who even are not people who are not ready ready for anything more may be open in some cases to hearing for example about inner body awareness and nothing else if you can if it's if the situation is it again here you have to just see if the situation is right not just go and say okay next time I'm going to see if I'm going to talk about inner body awareness but if the situation is right it arises naturally out of the situation you could teach your grandmother your grandfather or your father or mother already about having feeling the inner energy field of the body without any kind of esoteric words that they might object to or spiritual words that they may object to or their ego may object to just the possibility of being feeling the aliveness in the body if people who are very much burdened by a problem-making mind who have spent sleepless nights thinking about their problems then you could say something like well when I this happens to me also sometimes you can say and when I wake up in the night it's just one example and thinking about problems I realize it's completely pointless and what I do is I put attention into first into my hands then into feet and then feel the entire body and suddenly I'm not thinking about my problems anymore I'm just it feels good to be alive this is a very basic thing that even people who reject any even a hint of anything spiritual that's they might be able to accept that because it seems very body it's body so it must be real so it's a very gentle thing resist the temptation of wanting which is sometimes because one feels so that such a change comes to you that you want to tell it to everybody but not everybody

wants to hear it yet wait for the right situation or the right question and then the teaching happens some people you just have to allow them their unhappiness for the time being they still want

[Speaker 5] (6:46:08 - 6:46:46)

it and that's compassion too hi my question is how do how do I maintain a sense of presence when I'm in the company of another person how do I bring presence into conversation yes thank you

[Speaker 1] (6:46:48 - 7:11:46)

not easy because the moment you start talking the two minds come together and so they strengthen each other and a flow starts of a stream of thought and so easy to a moment ago you were present and then somebody starts talking oh you know what this what no you know what he said what he did oh my he always does that and again the what applies here is the loss of space during the conversation both participants of the conversation have lost any sense of space there there's only the word the mind the verbalization the stream of thinking that becomes sounds and they are taken over by that it has its own momentum almost a little entity is and stream doesn't want to end it's host and and often it generates emotions in the body so that strengthens it gives amplifies it and if the mental stream triggers emotions which is often does when you talk especially talking about things about other people what they did fail to do did to you to others criticisms gossip all kinds of emotional the ego comes in because when you can criticize another it's nothing personal it's part of the mental stream when you criticize another the ego feels a little bit stronger you have grown a little bit because you by diminishing another in the delusional system of the ego you have enhanced your own self image a little bit because obviously this person is being correct so any kind of any criticism of another he such and such that all that is part of that energy stream and then emotions come amplify the thoughts loss of space now for you to regain space without saying I'm not talking anymore even carrying on how do you regain first one thing is necessary for you which is the realization that you've lost space without that I don't need to say anything to you because there's nothing you can do when you are so taken over by a stream of thoughts that you don't even know that you've been taken over by a stream of thought there's nothing you can do forgive them for they know not what they do the you're unconscious you are the stream of thought and as the stream of thought you don't want it to end because you don't want your own end every entity wants to remain in form as long as possible so when you are the stream of thought so identified with it nothing you can do but if there's a slightest realization that you lost it there's no space and this is much more likely to happen the more awareness arises in you that in the middle of being immersed in a stream of conversational stream in the middle of it you suddenly realize what's happening and that moment you have a choice but so what is your choice your choice is to bring some presence into this some space into the

stream of thought but how do you do that first of all of course it's still it's coming at you not only from within your own mind it's coming at you from the other person too but there's the the awareness is there okay presence what do I do because that that realization that you've lost it if you don't do anything but may only last three seconds and then it's gone again so you have to use those two or three seconds where you realize the loss of space and then do something in that space where you have some freedom to act and so then you by a conscious choice you take your attention out of thinking but you have to anchor it somewhere else then otherwise it won't work so you anchor it somewhere else that is not in the stream of thinking and you choose either your breath or your inner body or some other sense perception around you that you become aware of but when you're actually talking to another person it's probably easiest to either use your breath or your inner body so while you're talking or you while the moments when you're not talking especially but even while you're talking you feel the put attention into the inner body you practice that beforehand when when conditions are easier so that you can do it once it's necessary go into the inner feel the light and feel your energy field is alive as you sit there and you'll notice you're not thinking anymore you can still listen the amazing thing is you can listen to another person without thinking easily beautifully so you're listening but part of your attention is on the inner energy field it's so you've taken attention away from your thoughts and some of your attention you don't require that much attention for listening enough to take it in but part of your attention is in the inner energy field as you can do now as you sit to listen to these words you will notice that you can be aware as you sit there of your inner energy field in the background so to speak to feel its aliveness throughout the body some parts you can feel more strongly perhaps it's for some people it's you can feel it more in the chest region or the extremities but it's you can feel it in the entire body that's great a global sense of aliveness in the background and it's ultimately formless it's already the the doorway into the formless it's not the physical body anymore so feel that while you sit there and listen and you've stepped out of the stream of thinking and then the quality of the interaction immediately changes the other person may not consciously notice what's happening and may carry on for a while it also doesn't mean that you cannot respond anymore but also how you respond and how the quality of your response changes too you're no longer contributing to the negative nature which is often the case in conversations so and and a certain amount of stillness then will also be part of the words that you speak some space even in between the words and again it's it's so subtle that the other person probably won't notice it consciously so that's the post problem hang on to the inner body the angle let it be the anchor and then you're becoming present you're present and if you lose it again when the other person says something challenging and then after a little while you remember up gone back into the inner back into the inner body that's a powerful anchor and then everything changes from there that's it's practice practice continuous practice and because when you're in touch with the inner body there is that is really spacious it's the its energy the beginning of the formless I call it halfway between form and formlessness what is Chi or life energy is the bridge between the

formless and the world of form so to feel the Chi the inner liveness is you are moving towards the formless then that's beautiful already even halfway across the bridge it's beautiful and so that is on the phone do the same when you're on the phone with somebody listening to it on the phone you can also use because you are not looking at the other person you can also use sense perception as an anchor that's a sense perception awareness of sense perceptions acute awareness of sense perception is a powerful anchor for presence so when you're on the phone maybe you have a flower next to you or you look out of the window at the sky could be anything even an inanimate object can do it if you have something natural it's easier but even anything a shiny glass anything give it your be acutely aware of it while you listen so you have attention takes attention away from thinking so you can see the beauty of the sky while you while you're listening to your friend if it's a friend if it's somebody who is infusing you or complaining then it's even more important of course and and she requires it's a greater challenge the more unconscious your the other person is which means the more identified with a mental stream and the emotions and reactive the more of a challenge it is and I noticed that in the when I come across people who are extremely unconscious sometimes occasionally mentally unbalanced who are very totally identified with their minds I always I feel an automatic shift of an intensity of presence throughout the body almost not a decision-making process it comes just naturally and often the person then becomes more sane in that moment when you're intensely aware it's almost like and I've seen miraculous things in some people happening and that being acutely present and it's a very healing thing deeply healing for yourself and whatever is around you in that whatever the field and probably reaches out even touches others you don't even see acutely very present the more challenging the more present the same with situations circumstances some are challenging threatening gain that's the fuel that we talked about the fuel for consciousness the challenge becomes a fuel for consciousness the greater the challenge the more intense there's no there's no effort in it of course because presence is not effort but it is high energy so if you walk out of here and suddenly let's take an extreme case the whole city crumbles around you you would go and maybe then maybe you only have a few more seconds before your body also crumbles but it's doesn't matter anymore once you have the certain level of awareness is reached then the challenges will intensify awareness until that level of awareness is reached challenges will diminish the awareness and pull you back into unconscious reaction so there is a certain threshold when a person reaches that threshold any challenge that comes in will just strengthen awareness intensified but before that threshold when you're challenged by a situation or person you will go into an unconscious reaction and lose presence so challenge can make you lose presence or intensify presence and when you're in the middle of the threshold there you can even you have a choice in the moment of a challenge you know okay am I going to fall down or am I going to rise okay it will be much easier and presence is not something just that happens inside you it does affect what happens outside of you and non-reaction not meaning that you don't take the action that is necessary in a challenging situation but

not inner reactivity against something in the absence of that very quickly situations change because the reaction against often intensifies that what's happening out there and makes it worse and very often it's the reaction is far worse in the event I'm often amazed what little things trigger enormous negative reaction in people tiny little things quite insignificant and yet no completely out of proportion to the triggering event now the non-reaction of course is not sometimes people mistake it and believe that a non-reaction is putting up some kind of barrier and sometimes people try to do it that way but that's not it say okay I'm not going to react to this person or this situation I'm not going to let it touch me nothing can touch me that's not dissolving it through presence presence is rather you're transparent to it rather than trying to hold it or fight it so let's say something coming towards you metaphorically speaking instead of doing you let it pass through you or at least you step aside gently the person come you or it goes right through okay and not feeding the situation that has arisen out of unconsciousness factors of unconsciousness not feeding it through reaction it's powerful a lot of ones karma what we call karma which is really the accumulation of unconsciousness reaction patterns of reaction emotional mental patterns people think karma is what what happens to you but to some extent it's true but mostly karma is your reaction to what happens your reaction to what happens now determines what happens next and so often situations that would for some people be relatively insignificant in others trigger an enormous reaction they trigger their karma and so they become unhappy in certain situations where other people would simply say oh well that's that's that it's gone and others are big extremely reactive I can sometimes see it when with me people get very angry with me sometimes the and usually it's about something that I didn't do or rather failed to do you didn't reply to my letters you I've written three times you didn't you still haven't replied I'm really feeling totally dishonored and whatever there comes a huge story of by I'm feeling disregarded not honored in my being and to alter the coming story that would make anybody feel guilty they don't realize that well first that I I have a backlog of several thousand letters and so it's taken personally it's a natural thing to do others might say I wrote to you but you didn't reply and that's fine I've actually found my own answer thank you so much nothing happened and somebody else feels totally diminished in their sense of self because I didn't reply and again that enormous I'm sorry if it's you so please take this as a reply when I've just written the power of now the it was recommended to me to send it to some famous people so that they could read it and say something good about it so I sent it to Deepak Chopra and Marianne Williamson and one or two others and I didn't hear from them and that was fine I don't have karma in that sense I didn't feel diminished in my sense of self because Deepak Chopra didn't reply just but I by sending it to say much I did wonder why didn't he reply of course now I know I didn't reply he gets thousands and thousands of things like that manuscripts and books every day they arrive can you please write something about my book well of course he didn't look at it much later when it wasn't needed anymore he saw it and he wrote something nice about it and much later I got a beautiful letter from Marianne Williamson who said I'm so sorry I never got around to writing I was meaning to write a

forward to the path now but there was so much going on in my life I just couldn't get around and I didn't didn't notify you I'm so sorry about it lovely letter and I had already completely forgotten that I'd even asked her when I got that it was years later but it was lovely to get it so reaction taking things personally and reacting and putting and finding an enormous amount of suffering out of a small situation that in itself is quite insignificant but the suffering arises through one's reaction to the situation and that's karma and that determines how you perceive the next moment and so on the freedom from reaction is the freedom from karma that the and that is presence and that's the gradual fading out of karma of all the inherited all the old patterns that one carries inside at any time you have an issue with somebody you're putting some blame on somebody who did this or failed to do this and complaining about somebody that's always a form of ego and unconsciousness so if there's any this is where I suppose it's we're talking about forgiveness if there's anybody left in your life towards whom you bear some grudge or ill feelings you have to look there but they are red there are parts of your karma still operating and that's holding you back from full awakening any grudge this person did that remember Marcus Aurelius with that mouth

[Speaker 7] (7:11:46 - 7:13:27)

and those armpits I am a musical artist I played music most of my life and only more recently have moved into making a career out of it and what I notice as I'm pursuing a musical career is there's so many places that ego becomes a pull the thought of things like fame or even giving a performance and wanting people to think things like wow he's such a great performer the different ways ego shows up while the thing that's the pulls me to music is there's a deeper drive a drive to share something deep and profound and they the ego things seem to get in the way so I guess my question is how how do I pursue my music career or maybe an artistic career to make it more relevant for more people without being driven by the ego or less driven by the ego how does the ego manifest did

[Speaker 1] (7:13:27 - 7:13:34)

you say in your at how do you see it when you do the during the performance before or after or at

[Speaker 7] (7:13:34 - 7:13:50)

other times or sure I can be in a performance thinking I hope they like me or I hope they're liking what I'm I'm doing yeah okay or I want to get to this level of success with my music like

[Speaker 1] (7:13:50 - 7:14:08)

this person or that person do you play alone or with a group both and just before I

answer what's the name of yours and the group so that we know when you become famous we know who to look

[Speaker 7] (7:14:10 - 7:14:17)

Elliot Samuel that's my name okay and the group has a name the Elliot Samuel band

[Speaker 1] (7:14:40 - 7:24:10)

with that kind of of course with when you perform that's the art whether you are most closely associated with the person rather than if you're an artist who is painting or an artist who's doing whatever with the creating something with their hands or then there's a little bit more of a gap between the person and the work but here you have the person and the work are very closely related you you sing you play so their ego can perhaps more easily arise for an artist who paints you can you can promote your art without necessarily promoting yourself although some artists have done both successfully I remembered you may remember maybe you don't Salvador Dali he he made himself into a work of art he played a role whether he became the role or whether there was he still knew that he was playing a role after so many years of playing a role I don't know but he had this straight huge mustache and it behaved in a very eccentric way as if he were as if he himself were as a realist painting and he became famous perhaps partly because he became such a he was a performance it's not only the work he created and there are even authors who made themselves into characters of their own creation Truman Capote for example he always was very much out there dressing in a particular way and so you become your brand name and people promoting themselves in that way it's neither good nor bad it just is whether whether it is ego or whether they know that they are simply performing I don't know only they can tell ego ultimately means you become the role without knowing it that it's really ego and it can happen that an artist or to promote him or herself initially just plays a role and then after 10 or 20 years of playing it he is the role then it's really ego so another thing as you if you have thoughts of acceptance or wanting to succeed or be liked and so on while you play that will take some energy away from your performance so because it will divert energy from the actual the doing and performing of it into thought thinking so you won't be giving a hundred percent to give a hundred percent you need to be so present that there's only just complete attention to that and the most successful performance are totally present while they perform when they stop performing many of them are no longer present but while they perform there is that absolute attention to just this moment they're not aware of anything or anybody so if you can be total in that doing that will add energy to what you do you don't and as far as promoting your work is concerned there are some successful musicians and singers who don't seem to do that and others do it they don't promote necessarily themselves they just do their art and they are successful in that Sarah McLachlan for example she just does what she does there's no particular character she creates who does that or perhaps I don't know Enya perhaps she just sings so and others feel the

compulsion to to it comes with a performance if there's a team people want you they want to they want they want to perform and so you begin to perform nothing wrong with the performance the problem only starts when you the the character that you adopt if you if there is a character in your performance you dress up in a certain way if that takes takes you over after it can happen after a while that you get stuck with what initially was simply a creation to entertain people to make it more entertaining like it's like a theatrical performance and but then the character somehow gets into seeps deeper into you and then before you know it in private life you're still the character that the famous one so some some famous people have have succumbed to that and they became very unhappy because if you're stuck with a false role that you play then everything becomes false in your life the people you attract and so on that you attract then people you want only people who strengthen the role that you're playing they love those people and there's no true relationship and those people are drawn to that role and they want some reflected glory from that role so that that can reflect and enhance their role they look close to you the famous one and so on it becomes an all in egoic play but very false so if you have a performance and you create a kind of performing character some rock musicians do that they may be normal people in normal life and when they're on stage they look extremely wild and then when you see them in normal life they sit and and of course the then they notice that they're the all the fans they don't want the normal person they want the strange character and so when they see that then they begin to play that role even in their lives because people think you're boring you don't who is this is not we want we want this high-energy mad crazy guy that's what and then you play it in even in your daily life that's the danger starts if you can separate the role from who you are then it's fine it's just a play with form so don't become the role if you play one and during the performance the essential thing is absolute presence many performers are nervous before performance or they even think I can't do it it's not going to work they're not going to like me they may have a lot of mind activity that's a typical thing of stage fright which many people have what are they going can't do it today heart is beating and then they get on stage and for the as it starts the energy takes over and they become totally present and then it works that way and for some they even while they perform there's some as I mentioned some mind activity some hesitation are they liking it and so on that which takes energy away from the performance so it's a good practice spiritual practice we will look out for you and your band and see in a few years where you are and who you are thanks thank you good afternoon Eckhart

[Speaker 14] (7:24:10 - 7:25:14)

I enjoy brainstorming and sharing ideas though sometimes I reflect on my doing and wonder if being the space would be more beneficial and then my question is how do we balance being the space and playing creatively with the forms yes is that also to do with your work at work with my work with my it's been part of my work but I also take it into the other areas of my life the community things that I work in in the community friends

yes

[Speaker 1] (7:25:17 - 7:41:07)

well that's the dance the balance the dance between form and formlessness in your life that's a big challenge and that's the art of living to have the to the formless dimension of space or stillness if you could call it or aware presence in which there's little or no thinking going on a deeper sense of presence and thinking which is form thoughts forms creating physical forms creating speech creating things doing things interacting getting things done in this world the the focus of what we are about here is of course on accessing the dimension of space and the reason why that's the focus is because the world is unbalanced the world is completely lost in thinking and doing that activity of the mind no sense of formlessness spaciousness stillness sacredness whatever you want to call it the eternal the God the divine dimension because that's that is the world is out of balance the emphasis here is on accessing that dimension of depth but because the other people are doing that already they've got form is everywhere thinking is everywhere but of course it is true all the emphasis is on this a balance is you need to have a balance in your life and that's the ultimate challenge is to to have the two in balance you could also call it yin and yang yin being the still the receptive allowing acceptance of what is as expressed in the feminine gesture of all embracing stillness and the thinking and doing and creating new forms now if you lose touch with that dimension then your creations and your thinking become more and more insane and you so you go into hyperactivity of thinking and doing but all you're thinking and doing becomes just more and more mad so you create mad structures out there you create a mad civilization you create a mad state of mind because there's a loss of that time deeper dimension in you and this is where the world is right now I'm not saying people should go to the other extreme and refrain from doing no we need to find a balance a balance between action out there and allowing so you have to in yourself in daily life that's the only place to start it's nothing to do with out there have allow yourself to become still not only when you do a meditation in the morning or the evening but in between things in life and that once you develop that ability to go into stillness whenever you want to then that's it because then what even while you're discussing something with someone what are we going to do how are we going to do this you can bring it's not just for one hour you're going to doing or you can intersperse the doing with being so to speak so while you're thinking okay what is it that we can do if you really want to think creatively you have to become still for a moment and then see what comes up after that and that is accessing the deep the depths of your being that is the stillness that is the formless intelligence or consciousness and so you go there okay I don't know what to do here you become still and then see what else what comes after that it can sometimes it may only need to be five seconds ten seconds or while somebody is telling you what or how they see it you listen in the state of still alertness and then sometimes what your input suddenly is new and creative because you listened in still alertness and then the words

suddenly come out of your mouth oh I didn't know that well it wasn't your creation it was it came from the source of all creativity so it's vital it's not only to support to save this world which otherwise is going to be or totally insane if enough humans don't find that dimension within themselves so it's not just to help you on a personal level and make your life more pleasant and more creative and more beneficial but it's it is vital for the whole of humanity that enough humans find that dimension realize it and live it in everyday life so then you have the although here I emphasize the being you need the balance I just the reason why I emphasize the being in this teaching is because you have the other already well most of you have so there is the universe has two movements one one of course the outgoing movement creation of form the universe becomes more and more complex and differentiated goes from the the oneness of before the Big Bang the unmanifested oneness it goes into until there are billions upon billions of stars galaxies planetary systems worlds amazing diversity the universe once obviously wants that and every human has that inside the human also wants to create there is that outward movement but the universe has in a corresponding movement that is it also wants to return to the source which was never lost and you can find it and why do I know this because I know it in myself and everybody if you look within you can see you have the two movements but part of you wants to go out and create and another part wants to go home and be in some people one is much stronger than the other so you have Tony Robbins is the and you have a cartoli which is the so you have to dance in between but you may feel drawn something you're not all humans are right in the middle some humans are much more one way others are much more the other way but you need to have the some set don't disappear into being you just happen soon enough but what while you're still here as a body you don't need to go and say okay from now on only being feed me if you go to India you can do that they will feed you but if you do it here they'll put you away that's the challenge land for us here is that so in your next brainstorming session you can practice a lot stillness and then go back into okay what sorts what you have to contribute talk okay and then you while you listen still alert or then for a moment close your eyes or look at the sky and if you get stuck somewhere okay what's the problem here this this this okay I don't see any solution to this and you drop it don't continue to think about it that's pointless that you go around in circles drop it and stillness Einstein had a wonderful ability to always because become still and go for long walks and then he came home picked up his pen Oh theory of relativity where did that come from he did a lot of thinking but it happened to him when he was he had a boring job in a patent office in Switzerland and during this boring job all this creative work came to him and so there was no pressure to produce anything there was no academic pressure he didn't have an academic position at the time they didn't he applied for jobs they didn't want him and so and he did later described himself as just being more slow than others that's what his great achievement people say he said people think I'm a greatest genius but really it is I take longer to think about these things I'm slower when he was a child the people around him his parents and his nanny he thought he might be mentally deficient because he was so slow so he had this that

means he had this deep connection still with being he did a lot of thinking too but without losing the connectedness with being and without becoming identified with his thinking he didn't develop an ego on the basis of his mental achievements it's a wonderful thing that's and that's creative the truly creative humans know that it's not a personal achievement the moment you think this is the personal achievement you block the source of creativity creativity is allowing it to come from the deeper level of consciousness itself consciousness you become a channel for that it's not you so the ego will try to come in perhaps at some point if some beautiful creation has happened through you or great brilliant ideas come to you well I thought of that but where really did it come from or if you write a book and the book is has power and is inspiring where really did that come from did you the person did you write that where does that power come from no it's not the person you can't create that many people try to imitate it but without having access to it but if you have access to the depths within yourself that's where the power comes through but you have to become still for a moment alert receptive and you it's helpful if you have a vehicle because otherwise the power if you don't have one it's fine too but if you want to create something have a vehicle into which the power can flow whether it's music or interesting ideas or creating some structure for the good of humanity or for people to feel more joyful you create this or that or to help or whatever or an enlightened business or whatever it is the you're not going to create great music by becoming present I'm not going to create classical masterpiece in music because I can become present I would have to have a vehicle practice for several years and then the vehicle is there and creativity can flow into it but it doesn't have to be the criterion for humans the significance of a human life is not what they produce the criterion for this the value and significance of a human life is their state of consciousness which they emanate and the state of consciousness that you emanate is really what matters that is your contribution to the totality of consciousness when I say your ultimately there is not your you are part of the totality so that's the contribution is your state of consciousness affects many many others even if you didn't come into contact with them so if you are a peaceful and alive human being you emanate that and in every encounter you emanate that and it spreads kindness comes as part of that as the ego subsides kindness comes and so it's a wonderful practice and see what brilliant ideas you come up

[Speaker 6] (7:41:07 - 7:43:07)

with or come through you I've read all your books and I listen to your recordings on a pretty much on a daily basis and I don't say that to build up an ego that doesn't exist it leads into my question what I find in trying to practice the power of now trying to be conscious without thought is a very heavy inner dialogue of all the principles and things that I've read like how should I do this what would Eckhart say and and and actually my thought process starts getting more active and I think I'm losing the presence by that thought process and then I think it a your latest book with the cartoons which I love which I think there's one with a little bird in the tree he's talking to the dog he's very

upset and the dog says what's wrong and the bird says well you know I'm thinking about yesterday and this and that and I'm worried about what's going to happen in a week two weeks it's about the future what do I do what do I do and the dog just looks at him and says stop thinking so how do I you know it seems you try to stop thinking but and you read all this and you try to practice it but yet in any given situation I find that in order to get closer to practicing it or even practice it it's causing a lot of thoughts to happen so it's a different kind of thoughts or those thoughts that I should break that kind of

[Speaker 1] (7:43:07 - 7:56:23)

habit and if so how okay thank you thank you now the there's a lot of talk these days about not just talk actually it's happening addictions many people are addicted to all kinds of things substances but one of the greatest addictions or one of the greatest addiction never actually you never read about it in the papers because the people who are addicted to it don't know it it's the addiction to thinking it's actually addictive can't stop thinking it's like can't stop drinking can't stop smoking can't stop eating can't stop thinking thinking is the greater addiction than any of these and it's an addiction because it's first it's been a drug or it's just been around for so long and it's a pseudo sense of self so it's a great reluctance on the part of most people to let go of thinking because which is equated with the state of sleep to let go of thinking there isn't that much to understand in this teaching there's a little bit to understand about how the ego works but even that is just mainly a self-observation the main thing about it is presence presence and presence is a space of no thought but presence can also be there in the background even when thinking is happening you can still be not completely involved in the thinking thinking loses the ability to create havoc in your life and confuse you so your choice then is not to understand more or to bring some intellectual analysis to the practice but to practice the state of not thinking which can be arrived at by various ways as you probably know if you don't think about it just do it becoming more aware of the present moment and accepted as it is slows down the overactive mind is one thing because a lot of the overactivity of the mind is an attempt to get away from the isness the simplicity of the present moment so to become more aware of the present moment as a practice have perhaps little pointers in your office at home in your car let's say present moment or whatever or a symbol for it and there different entry points into the present moment present moment awareness means thinking subsides may not disappear completely but something else arises that is primary we call it presence or awareness buddhists call it mindfulness which i don't use because it implies your mind is full of things but it isn't of course it's just a mistranslation so to to be present first of all use the present moment to become but how do you become conscious of the present moment now when you get it after a while you can you can actually sense the presence of the present so to speak directly and that is but helpful things are sense perceptions take you out of thinking if you're not judging the sense perceptions labeling naming looking around anywhere wherever you are look around practice sense perceptions without this compulsive

interference of naming what what you're perceiving or that's a beautiful flow i wonder what it's called i don't know what it's called or that helps i can be free of thinking if i know what it's called i can say oh that's such and such and then drop that and see what it means to perceive without the interference of concepts words at this moment for example you're looking at me now let's say between now and now were you thinking no okay and again between now and now were you thinking or present no thought and while i speak do you need to think to understand what i'm saying or can you just listen and understand it and this is what you're doing and so that's part of the teaching and the function of the spiritual teacher imparting information is secondary what i'm telling you now is secondary what is primary is the underlying state of consciousness which is presence that's the teaching but you can't talk about that it's underlying but the sign that it's working is that while you listen there's no thought there's just an alert presence and when the so-called teacher stops speaking for a moment the alert presence remains it does not need to be filled with anything like now what is there to think about nothing now if we do this for longer if we're at some point your mind will probably start up and think how much longer is he going to sit there and and when that happens you can allow your mind to say how much longer is he going to sit there and say nothing and then come back to presence and then some other thought will come what's this all about and then you can allow that thought to rise and then be present again which means you're not really your priority is no longer to follow the thought where it wants to take you because the thought has a magnetic pull it wants more of your consciousness it wants to grow because it's a little entity it wants to grow so it wants to your attention and in subtle ways it tries to get your attention says it might even use a bodily feeling says god i'm hungry suddenly why didn't i need to eat something and then you think of a red what restaurant i'm going to afterwards and so the presence is gone you are gone you are looking for a restaurant in your mind which means the thought used as some bodily thing to make thoughts out of it completely pointless because you can't find a restaurant because you're standing here but it can use all kinds of things to manufacture most to get your attention and if you're not careful if you don't know the mechanism it's not so much an intellectual understanding but a simple realization that this is what the mind does it tries to pull you in it's fine that's what it does once you know that you can allow thought to arise without following it where it wants you to go which is into another bigger thought and a bigger one so then you become like like my dog when it finds a scent and then suddenly even the dog when the dog is off leash usually she's fine she just runs around you but suddenly she picks up a scent and then she goes off completely unaware of surroundings or anything he just follows it and she could get lost she goes off to the horizon sometimes just disappears and that's when you follow a thought it goes like that you can wake up 20 minutes later and it started with sleeping a little bit hungry and thinking of a restaurant and it ends up with thinking about how unthreatful your life is so you don't you don't follow the thought you'd say on this there's a thought you don't actually say it you just you you recognize it as a thought that arises and then the difference is the thought arises in the space of your consciousness it no longer absorbs

your whole consciousness then you're back to presence like now and that's the that's the practice so the spiritual teacher is primarily teaches presence the words are pointers to it the more important teaching comes through the the space out of which the words come this formless space of consciousness this is why it's good to sit here because because somehow we can then share here this beautiful spaciousness that the majority of humans on the planet still don't know about more and more people are beginning to realize this but still a minority most humans are still completely trapped in non-spacious content obsessed consciousness completely dominated by every thought that comes in content no space only content one thing after another what do i have to think about now dreadful state so the practice is presence and then thought gradually loses its power to take you over completely but choose presence sense perceptions become aware of sense perceptions listen wherever you are what what sounds don't judge them listen look touch even feel the the air on your skin that's that sense perception acute awareness of sense perceptions takes you out of thinking and makes you more alive makes you enjoy the aliveness of life much more whereas before you were trapped in a dead conceptual world in the head walking along a beautiful beach couldn't see anything couldn't feel anything not there and then suddenly but sense perception is not all there is they're beautiful as they are but what is it that underlies all the sense perception a field of alert stillness this is why the sense perceptions become so beautiful because they are there is a they arise in that field of alert stillness presence that's you and then you're awake not no thought so in nature every time your car stops at a traffic light look at the beautiful red light it's a it's another it's a form of life too it's light it's beautiful and that can stop your mind why not if it can stop your car why can't it stop your mind well that's a new practice and if it works if the red light at the traffic light stops your mind you might want to install some red lights at home everywhere

[Speaker 15] (7:57:03 - 7:57:56)

hello i come from a part of the united states that is um steeped in conventional christianity and um this is a problem for my 10 year old son because um all of his friends that he plays with in the neighborhood at school and in his sports everywhere um say things to him like he has been told he'll go to hell because he doesn't pray because we don't go to church things like that and i have tried to talk to you know explain to him well they have their beliefs and we have ours and um he said well mommy what are our beliefs and i have a very hard time because words concepts or ideas like consciousness are very hard for a 10 year old to absorb so i was just wondering if either of you have some ideas about how i might help him and understand you know why we don't

[Speaker 1] (7:57:56 - 7:58:56)

do those conventional things maybe you start because you had ought you brought up your girl also in with spirituality but not spirituality that is frozen into a rigid form as in some forms of christianity that can be defined defined in a few words this is what i this is

what we believe and if you don't believe that you will go to hell but a true spirituality that is more diffused um that doesn't um also does not subscribe to the old idea of god as the controlling male figure and so how did you deal with you perhaps had a similar problem i don't know you lived in detroit for 10 years when but that um with your daughter

[Speaker 3] (7:58:58 - 8:01:29)

i don't know where the tree comes in on we have very strong beliefs we believe that god is love we believe whether you use the word god or not we believe it's not like to me the transformational wisdom is not just a diffuse you know la la thinking we have very strong beliefs and regardless what words you use it has to do with when eckhart because when eckhart talks about pure consciousness one word for what is there is love so for me it was we and i'm jewish so my daughter it wasn't she wasn't learning anything in in that wasn't easily seen it's the same that god is love we do believe honey we believe that there is something in our hearts called love and then i don't know if you call that god or not that has to do with how you what you're teaching is the basic spiritual teacher of a child which the mother is i believe and we believe that there is a love in our hearts and we believe that we are on this earth to love one another and we think that for me it was like i wrote a book for little ones called emma mommy talk to god that when we have a problem with other people with other kids at school they must not be happy so we pray for their happiness and we believe that that is the power that we love each other i mean you you speak from that place so my daughter was taught a distinct set of principles and that is that once again whether you call it god or not that there is love in the presence of which all things are made right that is what you were saying you know your your teachings are not they're they're diffuse but they're not there's not an incoherence there there is a coherent belief system and we i think we do disserve our children if we make it to like la di da there's no belief system here there's a strong belief system it's that in any given moment we seek to return to presence you know i used to always say to my daughter go back to your center honey go back to your center that's a strong belief and that if i can be in that place and no matter how people have acted towards us we're just going to send them love and any thought that comes up that's that we don't feel happy we're just going to give that over and then you say to god whatever your belief system is that's our belief system honey that's what we believe

[Speaker 1] (8:01:31 - 8:04:28)

that is a belief system that is uh deeper than what is conventionally for many people called belief because it's knowledge more than belief yes that's that's right it's for because for many of the old conventional christians it's basically an ideology they subscribe to it's exclusively in the head that just defines things very in very rigid patterns and this belief is inseparable from an actual experience and experience is what matters yes because the belief that love is what matters you can't separate it from

the actual experience of that at this moment that's part of the thing that becomes an experience so it's no longer it's not just an ideology in the head it's it's not an ideology at all it's it's inseparable from experiencing the reality of that concept at the same time rather than just having a dead concept that you believe in at the same time you experience as you speak voice it and to the child at the same time you encourage the child to experience what that means that you can you can love a flower you love an animal you love a human being you can have love for all living things and can you and you encourage the child to actually commune with just simply to not to get at an early age already full of conceptual beliefs that separate the child from experiencing life we've children are being fed with concepts these days at a very early age the head and even even a thing like when a child first learns to speak of course there is a stage when they always ask what's this called what's that called what's that and you have to of course tell the child the names of things but even there to to not not equate the naming with the reality of it so to continue to carry encourage the child to after you've named this is the an oak tree we call it an oak tree it's not an oak tree because to know the oak tree you have to still feel it and sense it and look at it and experience it and when you open yourself to it that's one manifestation of love you can you can encourage the child not to get deadened by concepts because this is what the world tries to do to children so they enhance they come to inhabit an exclusively conceptual reality ideologies in the head so this this this belief is yes you can have concepts but immediately there's a deeper reality behind the concept and you experience that and you show the child how

[Speaker 3] (8:04:28 - 8:06:19)

to feel that and believe it you know if i take this box and i drop it my knowledge of gravity tells me that it will fall to the floor it's not just that i believe in the power of gravity i know the law i believe it because i know it there are objective discernible laws of internal phenomenon or consciousness the same way that there are objective discernible laws of the external world there is the law of gravity the law of thermodynamics well there is the law of cause and effect or karma which means as the course would say every thought creates form on some level everything i put out there i will get back it is part of teaching my daughter how to navigate the world to explain that to her if you have love in your heart you have a miracle here if you're holding anger you won't that's knowledge teaching our children spiritual wisdom i believe is as important as teaching them to brush their teeth or wash their bodies or eat well but it's not as we all believe here necessarily within a you know theological religious construct of dogma or doctrine it's not about that real religion is of course america says real religion and psychotherapy are at their peak the same thing it's understanding consciousness my question is

[Speaker 8] (8:06:19 - 8:06:33)

how to differentiate between true guidance and wishful thinking yes and perhaps your

question

[Speaker 1] (8:06:33 - 8:06:47)

means whether to believe in thoughts that come into your head do you have an example perhaps of

[Speaker 8] (8:06:47 - 8:07:21)

something happened recently uh yes we were selling our house after two years of it being on the market there was much stress we were trying to figure out where to move where we could afford to keep my horses with me and i searched the whole country and thought maybe portland oregon would be good it added up on paper and i thought okay and it felt really really good inside and i had friends up there so we went up there and it did not feel right when we went up there and i was so convinced that this was the right place to go and it was not so delusion or

[Speaker 1] (8:07:24 - 8:07:29)

so when you went there you feel realized this is not the place for me right when i was there

[Speaker 8] (8:07:29 - 8:07:42)

in the place i just went this is not the right place for us was it raining no it was actually 95 degrees we were there it was beautiful but it did not feel right

[Speaker 1] (8:07:44 - 8:15:06)

yes okay thanks so yeah well the mind can often create an image of something or somebody and believe it to be reality a more more um drastic example of this is somebody i know of course this probably happens to many people these days uh he was he likes to spend time on the little screen internet and he he was looking for women or to to relate to to have a love relationship with and he found one and they started writing to each other every day over several months well he was up north and she was in california so they didn't meet for a long time and the in him in his mind her image grew and grew and he almost felt he was beginning to fall in love with her of course he had never met her so obviously falling in love with he was the image he had created in his mind and he came to me a few times and i said you have got to meet her there's no point in even talking about it because he wanted to talk about his relationship he didn't have a relationship except with some thoughts in his mind and finally they met and that was the end of it so often thoughts create an image and we believe in that and whenever you can the if you can encounter the reality directly as in in the case story i just told as a person or in your case the place it often happens people have an image in their mind where they want to move to and they that really feels good well it feels good because

they are mistaking this good image in their mind for reality so they are not relating to the reality the place but to the image i'm going to move to whatever tahiti that really feels good the palm trees and the sun and the warmth and i'll be on the beach every day well you are probably on the beach and so but when you finally i don't not saying tahiti is not good but when you get there you you may it may not be right because it's only an image it was an image in your mind that you created some people move to another country that has never been to one i knew of an english friend who had this wanted to move to canada and had this must have seen some photos or films about calgary but the mountains in the background and the skiing and all that and then they a couple actually they moved they gave up everything they sold their place in england moved to calgary and the first couple of months were okay and then winter arrived and the next year they went back to england they had created an image so whenever possible go to the reality directly if there is a reality there and in other cases when thoughts come you may not be able to to check because you may have a thought of what you need to do so yeah you can't check you either do it or you don't do it this is what i have to do uh it's observe the now i'm not talking now about creating an image in your mind but doing feel what kind of energy is behind that and whether it stays with you for a long time um i have to start i have to whatever it is breed uh dogs or whatever this is what i really want to do but the question is there you can have you lived have you been had a lot of contact with dogs or is it just an image some people say oh i want to become a concert pianist i want to become a writer this is really feels good i want to get become a writer okay have you have you read literature books yes i have five books in at home i uh because they just have an image of what they would want to do but the question is find out first whether this is something that truly corresponds to what you are good at what what beyond thinking you have to step beyond thinking to see whether this is some this is right for you rather than an image in your mind i want to be an actor well can you act that's the first question well not that that doesn't hinder some famous actors but but it helps if you can do i leave this relationship or should i stay in this relationship okay and some some people spend years staying in the relationship thinking should i leave should i stay if it's true it is it there's a whether to do something or not there's an underlying field of peace when it's right and it's not just a momentary thought it's a continuous even next week next month it's still there there's peace with it every causing miracle says every loving thought is true everything else is an appeal for healing and help so you reinterpret that but again it's not not easy don't believe in all your thoughts you need to be alert present the more alert you are the more present you are the more likely you are not to be deluded by thought but even if you are occasionally deluded by thought that's fine you go somewhere you've learned a lesson you've learned something at least now you know one place where you don't want to be now try out a few more but this time before falling in love with a thought or an image go there first and if that feels right then then next step is go so touch the reality beyond thought

[Speaker 10] (8:15:32 - 8:16:21)

i'm a little nervous so i'll just take a moment to breathe allow yourself to be nervous yeah thank you um the death issue has come up from my daughter and has done for some time and i've tried to explain as best i can and it doesn't seem to matter how i explain what i say it doesn't alleviate her concerns and fears and probably whenever will and i just wondered if you'd care to say a few words on how to explain the death process to a child how old is she is five

[Speaker 1] (8:16:23 - 8:16:32)

so as a child experienced a death somewhere in the family or close to her or is it

[Speaker 10] (8:16:32 - 8:16:55)

not not no she has not no but the she has asked questions about it yes and i think i think what i think what prompted it was when she realized that she could lose me and her father that's her deepest fear is once she realized that was a possibility that's what brought up all the yeah

[Speaker 1] (8:17:04 - 8:22:32)

perhaps by showing a death in nature you can show the child that the forms that she sees in nature especially if i don't know whether you live in a climate where the leaves fall from the trees and i live here yeah okay then you do the leaves fall from the trees they die in the autumn so there's death all around you in the autumn a large part of nature seems to die but of course it doesn't but there's the appearance if you had never seen it before you would think all these trees are dying they are not of course it's only a stage in their growth so to show that pick up a dead leaf or a dying leaf by the way a dying leaf is very beautiful very often it's it becomes more beautiful than the when it's fully alive as you know the colors some leaves turn into beautiful red or yellow so the dying process can be very beautiful as it can be for humans too that's an comes a little later the to show the the fact of death when you when you go into the forest the forest is part of the forest is dead matter becoming being in a process of metamorphosis the dead tree trunks the decaying matter that you see there's death all around you and yet out of that it comes new life continuously so the mind would say i wrote about that briefly somewhere in a book the mind would say oh this is bad look at all these things have died it doesn't see that the death and life are inseparable for life to continue there needs to be also death these are simple facts that you can show to a child and not explain conceptually but show by looking pick that up look at that look at this tree trunk it's been dying for or it's dead or it's still in the process of dying and already it's giving birth to new life especially in here around here we have forests where there's enormous amount of life you have phenomena like a new tree growing out of a dead seemingly dead trunk tree trunk they call it or a tree that's fallen and died and then out of the log a new tree grows if they call it a nurse log i believe and you have don't have that in all climates but here you do so there's show nature and show that life is not what you see

on the surface of things that's the the form that life takes when life leaves quickly the thing that seemed to be alive it seemed to have a life of its own crumbles and disappears so the life is not death is not the end of life it's only the end of the form so you can explain this by showing the leaf the leaf of a tree one leaf is alive the other leaf is dead what's the difference there's there's something in that leaf that is formless and that is what gives life there's something in you that is formless you might even say can you feel that that can you feel the life in you and you might be surprised that children who are not yet burdened by excessive mental concepts may be able to feel that they are alive and that is that doesn't die but what eventually does die of course yes the body eventually does die but there's something beyond death so if possible not just as a belief to the explain it to the child but as a sensing can the child feel the inner the inner body the animating presence in the body you say though there's the life that's deeper than the body can you feel that so to teach the child not necessarily concepts but actually to teach through experiencing and looking and sensing and feeling so then to learn about death and to learn about life they're really one and so without conditioning the child's mind necessarily with two rigid belief systems you don't have to say there is this the soul goes on or something keep it very within the experiential realm and then let the child draw her own conclusions right

[Speaker 10] (8:22:32 - 8:23:38)

we i have read books to her we've read a child's book on reincarnation so she does have she does have an understanding of um being drawn back to this place that if you have unfinished business she does have a sense of that you may be drawn back so maybe that was my fault for getting too maybe too complicated with her in in in that sense and just because now she wants to specifically know how where do you go and how do you know so i then now i have to describe now i have to describe that place there's a there's a place a deep a deeper place in myself i don't know i don't i say to ultimately i don't know but there is a deeper place in me that i can connect to that i know that when you die it's not the end yes and so i've probably complicated matters by reading to her story on reincarnation yes there we are yes so you keep it

[Speaker 1] (8:23:38 - 8:24:07)

yeah experiential yes yes right thank you i had a dream once and in the dream

[Speaker 4] (8:24:07 - 8:26:58)

um i was asked to sit in the back seat of the car and not drive the car anymore they had a new driver and so i was curious and i sort of thought to myself well i'm a good driver you know okay though but it was sort of like a father asking you to get in the back seat so you didn't resist it too much you just decided to do what he said so i got in to the back seat of the car and i wondered who who they were going to get to drive and i looked up and i saw this huge breast this was a dream right who can't see at all and so there was

the the non-seer and and the tenderness was basically driving my car and i woke up from this dream but but what it showed me was that what i loved was that the tenderness was directing my life that the being was directing the movement of my form i loved that but in that at times it feels very passive because in you're allowing things appearances to be what is without resisting the appearances and there's magic that happens too there's absolute magic that happens when you really allow the river to move your life but there's also times where i guess there's the pressure and the idea of creating my reality and being responsible and and to flower my dreams without using the will and so my question and i might be missing a piece or might be naive which is absolutely fine my question is that we have the human will and i you know there's an idea that that should be directing including with the source of life and i guess i'm looking for that balance really like a really living you know like the breast and not seeing in front of me and loving that but at times feeling um questioning just really honestly questioning if if if i am actually serving that or if there's another piece of co-creating with that thank you it's the

[Speaker 1] (8:26:59 - 8:36:14)

by living aligned with the present moment you also align your will with with the universal will which you could call the will of god so that you don't have a separate will the separate will wants to enhance or strengthen one's sense of self one way or protect it protect it make it more secure make it bigger more special the separate will is concerned with the me the i the ego but there is a divine consciousness the one consciousness has there's an evolutionary impulse and so what we are doing here every moment is to align ourselves with that non-resistance is vital because as long as you're in resistance the present moment you will be trapped in the little egoic will and so the egoic will needs to subside let's surrender to the present moment surrender to what is means the egoic will of the little me that wanted something else when you align yourself with what is internally you don't resist it looks at first like a position almost of weakness and can be misinterpreted it often is by people as meaning that it prevents you from taking effective action but the acceptance of what is is totally compatible with responding to whatever the present moment requires whatever wants to be created manifested done at this moment to be aligned with that you need to first accept whatever form this moment takes and so all you accept is not some kind of this is how the situation is you single out this moment only this is why occasionally give examples to make it illustrations to give to make it clear for example when you are ill you don't go around and say okay i need to accept this illness i need to accept the fact that i'm ill you may have a name for the illness you mean you know i have to accept that i'm suffering from this no because that's a whole conceptual thing it's a story you don't need to accept any story all you need to accept is this moment as it is and there's never actually an illness in this moment as it is there's only a condition a physical condition there may be pain there may be weakness disability discomfort those things may be there and

these are that's the only thing you accept that's this singling out just this moment is as it is now or some external situation the example i give somewhere else is you're stuck in the mud somewhere and so you're stuck in the mud and you don't say okay i'm in the mud i have to accept it and here i am i'm not taking not taking any action because you have to accept what is no this moment is already always as it is there's nothing you can do about that and that's what you accept then action that arises has a different energy to it and the will that flows into what you do then is no longer egoic when you have not accepted this moment the will goes against the universe almost which is what the ego always does it's it is negative it fights something that says it shouldn't be there there's negativity and so if you use negativity then you're you're trapped in ego so to have access to the more powerful will the little will of the me that fights what is condemns what is complains about what is denies what is and so on all the many ways of avoiding the present moment the little will has to subside for the more powerful will that is not you not as not the limited form of you to flow through you and deal with the situation and that powerful will is very different from the the willful will it is it creates it is not isolated from the totality it does not isolate itself from the totality it's one with the totality so when that operates another word for that universe is intelligence it's only that when you look at a situation completely accept the isness of this moment and then of course action may be required and and once this opening is there through acceptance the next step you take to get out of the mud or whatever it is will be much more powerful there's no struggle anymore there's just powerful right action uh there's a buddhist term right one of the many things the right action of course right action can only arise out of the right state of consciousness if there's no right state of consciousness you cannot cultivate right action so you have to get out of ego first before you can have right action so i believe probably the buddha was talking about that which flows from the awakened state of consciousness is right action and so the greatest strength is to surrender the little will and the simple tiny act of surrender of the little will is to say yes to the present moment it's it's not a big thing i have to let go of my will not just say yes to what is because it already is anyway why complain what about something that is it's insane but normal nothing personal normal means insane in this world so just to give up the egoic will really all you have to do is not complain about what is be aligned with the isness people situations whatever this it is already as it is it's the inevitability of is become friendly with is then you become more really you become intelligent for the first time even if you were the greatest intellectual before it's not true intelligence it's very limited intelligence you might have two phds or three and can still be totally dysfunctional in your in your life could be now this tiny you contact suddenly you're in touch with that it's for the simple act of surrender to the inevitability of the present moment another energy comes we could call that universal will you could call that intelligence and you could call that the creative solution to whatever the so-called problem is in this moment the situation is you could call that power coming in that is greater than the limited power of your mind or it may use your mind and suddenly you say the right thing if that's what the situation requires suddenly the words come where

do the words come from you don't know what you're going to say next they come from a deeper level and sudden because that intelligence uses the mind then it flows into that so then you don't create you just allow that's how you create yes you but you and the the universe or whatever the greater totality become one and as such it creates through you as this form that's a that's the beauty of it

[Speaker 4] (8:36:17 - 8:36:32)

so then thought doesn't matter well thought because if it's not you if you're not thought and you're not creating through the reality of thinking no but the the unmanifested when it

[Speaker 1] (8:36:32 - 8:53:19)

flows into this world it assumes form it create it can may create suddenly there are most thoughts that people have in the unawakened state are just almost all thoughts are repetitive old thoughts conditioned thinking conditioned by the past so all you can rely on then is what you have accumulated in the past and you will deal with things through conditioned thinking now when the simple act of surrender opens up your mind it can then be used as an instrument and then a thought may come in that is original and fresh and new because that's the birth of form the birth of form may first of all be the birth of a thought and then the thought creates a form out out there so the universe then if it uses you as a vehicle or channel through which to create and again we're using language which sounds as if you and that conscious the one consciousness were separate but it's just words but you're one it uses you can use your mind and become thought thought become words thought become physical things so that's the the way in which the mind can actually be a helpful tool alignment with the greater intelligence the one consciousness but it all starts with the present moment and what your relationship is with the present moment so to speak friend or enemy are you allowing it or are you fighting it resisting it then that's the also the end of ego the ego needs the resistance it survives through complaining it survives through denying wanting something else so work with present moment is the teacher the the possible always that work with that that's all you need really and so that's really then the end of the little will that isn't all that powerful anyway and whatever it creates creates more problems it seems so simple it is simple and yet because of the many thousands of years of habit patterns often people tell me it's so difficult to be in the present moment and allow it to be of course the opposite is true it's it's different life life becomes difficult if you don't but this is how it appears that it's difficult present moment acceptance the form the what you accept is the form of this moment no more then see what's what's needed you will you look you're not intelligent until that happens not truly intelligent the moment you accept there's a space and you look not necessarily through eyes but just directing attention and that's intelligence and that is still it's not you're not you're not thinking while you look your attention is there that's intelligence and then action may happen if it's necessary if the

totality requires it and sometimes holding that space of simple presence in a difficult situation where perhaps at this moment there's nothing you can do that sometimes is the case holding this holding the space of simple presence often activates other factors that then come in seemingly from the outside to change the situation you have activated the intelligence of the totality so it's not necessarily coming through this form this is why sometimes people speak of synchronistic things happening suddenly a helpful factor comes in and how could suddenly the right person appears the right thing happens oh how was that how did that happen sometimes almost miraculous when you don't know that this is actually natural seems like a miracle at first because most humans are not used to that when when you hold presence very often the change may not happen through your action there are many situations as i just said where action at this moment is not possible perhaps you just have to for this moment except well right now this is how it is there's nothing i can do however i can continue to be present to what is and alert and still and accepting of the inevitability of this moment then the greater intelligence is activated and then see what happens very often you will find change happening in the situation through some factor that you could not have planned or foreseen this greater intelligence is not the conceptual intelligence that you can measure with things like iq tests it's non-conceptual intelligence conceptual intelligence is the ability to analyze to retain information analyze compare iq tests that's a tiny fragment of what intelligence is it's quite limited but there's a vastness of non-conceptual intelligence which every creative person although most creative humans are only creative in a small area of their lives whatever the area of their creativity is but that's a blessing already even if you can be but our destiny is to be to live in that way so that our whole life becomes a work of art not just while you're doing your if it's art your work of art but your whole life becomes that not just be confined to that state of consciousness when you do your whatever your creative work is but anybody who is truly creative and not just an ego trying to be creative so something and every creative thing has a has a spark to it an aliveness a quality a newness a freshness no matter where it is even if it's a mathematical formula like einstein's it has a beauty and an aliveness to it and everybody says wow how did he get that well it is true that he did a lot of thinking but he also did a lot of not thinking einstein was very good at simply being he was not identified with continuous thinking there wasn't continuous thinking he spent long periods of time in simple being going for long walks on nature rest and that's where he connected with non-conceptual intelligence in the stillness the enlarged stillness within everybody has that as their essence connect with that there's true intelligence now to what extent you're connected with that could not possibly be measured by any iq test in fact if you are not good at iq just you probably won't get any better even if you're connected with the universal intelligence i can say that because i'm i was never good at iq test and i'm not good at it now i could do only the very simple ones the mind just doesn't work that way now there are certain tests some people are beginning to come up with tests that may measure creativity it's a little bit better there's a little bit still very limited extremely limited but a little bit better than just the acute test for example i read about it in a book

one test is they ask this is done at schools they ask write down all the things that one can do with a with a brick i read in one of these books that's popular these days write down all the things you can do with a brick well that requires a little bit and then when the answers you get show that some people are much more creative what to do with a brick than others so that matters just a tiny fragment even on that but at least it measures the beginning of creativity but ultimately you can't measure it impossible it's much too vast but you can see it by the result of either what is being created or the state of consciousness that this person emanates even if nothing is created it's fine your life does not necessarily depend on what you create being comes first with so access point to intelligence is the now just don't resist it and then there it is and the formula again i've had it before on various occasions if you this is almost like a little mathematical form it's not mathematics i couldn't do that but a formula if you accept the form of the present moment whatever appears even internally is part of it could be an emotion or some external situation place event person happening but except the form of the present moment by internal acceptance of the form of the present moment you open yourself up to the formless but if you resist the form of the present moment which means what happens what is if you resist the form you get more deeply trapped in in your own form identity the ego so if you resist form you get more trapped in form if you accept the form of the present no matter how limiting it may seem because very often the form of the present moment seems like a limitation on your life something is impinging on my freedom even in a traffic jam it seems to impinge and i want to get there but i can't get there that's the form of this and that's just a tiny insignificant example but probably in your experience happens often you're in a traffic jam so this is just one example of how the form of this moment seems to impinge on your freedom and impose a limitation on your life of course in much other in many other ways it can happen you can become the body could become ill maybe find it hard to move and then of course that's a more acute example of the form of the present moment impinging upon you and again if you accept even if it's dreadful because sometimes something happens that may be drastic if you can learn to accept and then when that happens something drastic happens but you already have been doing it with traffic jams and other things to say this is what is say yes to what is the form is accepted and the moment you say yes to what is a little bit at first it's only very subtle a little bit of spaciousness comes in what into your life from behind so to speak this is what is there's a sudden a little bit of space has opened up you're not just trapped in you're not just a resisting entity it you've you said it is space you allow it allowing means space you've given it space and then you realize that you are essentially formless space in other words peace inner peace at first just very gentle in the background in the midst of any situation when you accept it peace and that peace is powerful and it can become so powerful that it almost sometimes can happen that it obliterates almost everything and all you feel is it's the world becomes just insubstantial and every problem is becomes insubstantial it's just peace and and so the intensity may vary but peace is the formless in you so you by accepting the form the formless within you opens up this is this is how

something seemingly bad a limitation becomes an opening for realization of who you truly are and so that's the by accepting the form you access the formless by resisting the form of the present moment you become more deeply trapped in your own form identity the resisting complaining entity so simple the entire thing is in the crucifixion the archetypal symbol the cross is the dreadful limitation on your life the cross is the ultimate bad thing and surrender surrender to the cross this perhaps this gesture is the gesture of surrender surrender on the cross means that the torture instrument becomes transformed into something sacred because it opens up the space the cross the torture instrument but at the same time it symbolizes the divine it's one if you don't understand it then the cross is a very weird thing you say how can they make a torture instrument into into something sacred but the reason of course is it it's about an inner transformation through surrender to what is and and then you see that the divine is hiding in every situation no matter how it appears on the surface which means grace is hiding in every seemingly bad thing that happens there is the there is something hiding underneath it

[Speaker 12] (8:53:48 - 8:54:54)

Mr. Tully I am so thankful for your teachings and your writings my question might more suitably or well be asked by a younger person but how does one balance awareness consciousness presence with expansion and desires and goals and aspirations even at my stage in this human experience I have aspirations and goals and desires and I look at the intention of those and still uh try to to to be aware of the intention but still within that I I find underpinnings and weavings of egoic aspects and so much of the expansion that we see seems to be so egoic yes thank you thank you

[Speaker 1] (8:55:01 - 9:08:33)

that is it's true that in most cases when people go about doing things the ego is involved and what they're looking for is a more complete sense of who they are they're looking for more of themselves in what they do so it's really self-seeking through what they are doing and in all these cases the the end result what they want to achieve is always when ego is involved is always more important than the doing itself because you expect the future in other words becomes of greater importance than the doing in the present moment and that is always the hallmark of egoic action but very often with certain people there can be a mixed action it can be egoic motivation partly and presence in part also so you can have a mixed bag of motivation so let's come back to that in a moment but first of all the important thing to realize is in non-egoic doing which and expansion which is possible and this is what is needed on the planet for not just people to no longer take action action is required non-egoic action is action that arises out of enjoyment so as when you enjoy the doing you are you know there's more attention in the doing than what you want to achieve through the doing so in other words you know where you are going but you also know that the journey is much more important than

the arriving you also know that the step you're taking at this moment is much it's always the most important step there is this step this moment the ego doesn't know that because the ego always disregards this moment the ego makes this moment into an obstacle or it makes this moment into an enemy or at the best it makes this moment it reduces the moment to a means to an end but never acknowledges the fullness and the power of this moment that doesn't the ego can't do that so it's either the three things an enemy people people who are performing action with negativity continuously and there are many people in the business world or government or whatever there's a continuous negativity in what they do they get things done but whatever they do creates more negativity and suffering for themselves and others so they may be efficient on their on their level but they're only efficiently creating more unhappiness for themselves and others it's karmic action i call it sometimes it produces more karma and more of the same so it then you have making the treating the present moment as an obstacle there's just also the ego does and so many many people live like that there's they unconsciously always the present moment is they regard as something in whatever they do as something they need to go beyond so it's like this is the present moment and the ego always looks beyond okay i need to get get over this thing here i was need to get just get this moment out of the way so that i can get to the next one because the ego promises fulfillment in the next moment it doesn't come because when the next moment you reach the next moment it's the now again which again it's an obstacle so you can recognize the ego always whether or not the ego is active at any moment in your life in any action you undertake whether it's a business venture or you want to create this or that whether it's artistic creation anything uh is the the end with the the the end result you're considered more important than this or is there a complete attention to the doing in the present moment which means you enjoy the aliveness of the whatever activity it is you enjoy the doing in this moment more than where you want to get to which also means when an obstacle comes and true obstacle comes into not not the structural obstacle the mental obstacle that makes every moment into an obstacle when you encounter a true obstacle like say you want to build an enterprise or whatever and of course continuously obstacles will come in in the form of situations that go wrong or people who are not cooperative and so on if you if you react negatively against the obstacle then there's some form of ego because the obstacle is preventing you from where you want to get to if it's non-ego the obstacle is immediately recognized and accepted for what it is and you find a way of either circumventing it or transforming it into a positive force immediately you you come into alignment with the isness of this moment so when the situation goes wrong immediately say oh well how can we deal with this no negativity no fighting immediately if it's non-egoic immediately you accept the situation and then you go from there there's no complaining about what other people are doing how other people are not helping at all in this important thing how stupid other people are and whatever the ego does well it's always complaining about what people are not doing but should be doing or situations that shouldn't have been happening at all but all those things are signs of ego and the signs that there's no ego involved is when

you as soon as something comes in it's immediately accepted for what it is and there's also okay either non-resistance you walk around it but let's say let's see how else we can do it if this way doesn't work let's see if another way works no ego simply a gentle turning around so whether or not ego is involved you you know every moment by observing yourself to see what energy it is that flows into what you do and so ego is non-ego non-egoic creation or non-egoic doing always involves the enjoyment of whatever you're doing at the present moment and it enjoys even even when something seemingly goes wrong and immediately oh well let's see what we can do about that instead of complaint instead of fighting instead of making something into an enemy so there are a few people in this world who perhaps don't know why they naturally live in that not many but there are a few people who are successful in this world who naturally live in that way and but they are often immediately recognized as quite exceptional from what I've seen so far in because we don't know what the future will bring the so-called future Obama does I don't see any negative he deals with things quite consciously as they come not making anybody or anything into an enemy that's a huge change that has come and so it's a it's a wonderful thing to see how how conscious he actually deal consciously deepening now the question is are these structures around him and all the unconscious people that he deals has to deal with both in this country and other countries are they going to at some point pull him down into unconscious reactions we don't know we'll see but so far that's it's amazing to see somebody who is so so present in dealing with things that and I don't see any ego there not yet there may be remnants of ego but maybe his wife knows about it but but not in but not in public life so when it that's it's it's quite exceptional everybody knows that that's very exceptional because most other people live and act very differently so for you then self-observation needs to be there to see any the arising of any negativity means ego is there the arising of stress means ego is there because stress implies I need the future moment more than I want this one I want the next moment more than I want this moment and of course everybody lives like that everybody is under stress well most of the population in the western world are either under stress or they are completely bored out of their minds it's either one or the other so stress is insane because it denies life how does it deny life it denies life by denying this moment and that's a it's dreadful dysfunction and stress is normal in this world if you're not under stress they think you're not doing your job but you see how effectively somebody can do things without stress and without drama much more effectively much more effectively so self-observation look at your am I enjoying this moment am I how what is my reaction when something goes wrong am I creating stress or is there no stress there's much all these things are stress flows into what you do and creates more of the same and any negativity flows into what you do and creates more of the same and infects others with it so that's how all this unhappiness spreads an unhappy civilization civilization based on unhappiness and so whatever it is you your activity is be alert so that you know your inner state at any given time if you are aligned with the moment if you know where you're going but the doing right now is more important than the arriving even if you never arrive it doesn't matter in other words even if you don't succeed in

whatever your business or enterprise or maybe it you you're still enjoying what you're doing and so there's no no failure involved at all if there's deep enjoyment in what you do how can you fail and if there's no enjoyment then you have to look to see where the motivation actually comes from and of course and and realize that you're in a dysfunctional state and that realization is the beginning of freedom so that's a wonderful thing to do for everybody to practice and that applies to big endeavors in your whatever you do in your life all little things too because even little things like getting from your home to your place of work how do you do that is there stress involved there or is there acceptance and enjoyment of every moment even sitting in the car in the traffic jam of course you can enjoy that habitually one doesn't people are conditioned not to to say this is dreadful it's not dreadful at all unless the mind tells you it's dreadful be in your body breathe look at the tree the sky the people walking every moment is alive with wonderful miracles of aliveness happening continuously all around you the ego doesn't know about that so that's if we meet again report back to us on how you're doing so so yeah for for the youth

[Speaker 12] (9:08:33 - 9:08:42)

is what we would like to see for them would you call it conscious expansion yes conscious expansion

[Speaker 1] (9:08:42 - 9:09:42)

or conscious creation so that what creates then is not not not anymore the the ego with its needs that is never satisfied anyway but something within you that is the in the unconditioned intelligence flowing into whatever you do in this world and then then it creates and so the motivation is then no longer desire that's the traditional egoic motivation the motivation is enjoyment and enjoyment is much more powerful thank you is there another question that has not dissolved

[Speaker 16] (9:09:42 - 9:09:55)

it only has partly dissolved

[Speaker 13] (9:09:57 - 9:11:08)

hello my question deals with parents with practice and presence i felt love for them after many years not feeling love and feeling guilty for that but i still have huge problems to meet them when i meet them like if they are in the same room even if i try to be aware of my breath and my inner body after a while i have huge pain body attacks and is that triggered by something they say or i can't i can't even say that sometimes it's the way i i managed to go through the meeting quite fine and my mother leaves the room and i break down and yeah i i don't know what it is german parents can be difficult yes

[Speaker 1] (9:11:11 - 9:20:29)

i know american parents too so on one level there's already an acceptance of them on a mental level the acceptance of who they are the acceptance of their limitations they behave the way they behave is the the pain body is still there inside you of course and the pain body reacts it may also be that the mental level the mental acceptance is not yet complete either to see that they act the way they act speak the way they speak not because of who they are but because of their past conditioning which is their mental emotional conditioning is speaking through them they can't help that if there's not enough presence everybody is in controlled by their mental emotional conditioning they can't help it they are afflicted by that disease which is identification with unconscious conditioning i'm not the only one who calls that disease even in the ancient teachings of zen they sometimes call it the disease of the mind and there are some zen teachers who have said they are here to cure that mental illness i've said that's what zen is about it's curing that mental illness so you need to on the mental level as you sit with them you need to know that continuously that what you are observing is not who they are you're observing a form of mental conditioning underneath that there is the being the it's and you may sometimes get a glimpse of it my mother was very much identified also with her mind and occasionally i looked into her eyes and suddenly there was a light shining through when she stopped talking for a little while in other words the mind catching a breath after talking for 10 minutes incessantly and then for a moment i could see oh there's their being the her being was shining through and i have one or two photos where her being shines through and then of course it gets obscured again and then you get the same get the the suspicions the complaints the accusations all the stuff associated with unconscious thinking so on the mental level you need to know that be present enough so that you don't forget that what you're observing is not who they are but you're observing the past in them the conditioning and then comes the the emotions that you feel because there's your past the past the living past in you from your childhood all the things they did or failed to do because they couldn't help it there wasn't enough presence to change it so that's something for you to find acceptance as you accept them you accept what you feel at that moment whether you can even label it we don't know is it sadness is it anger is it heaviness or mixture of all of that a feeling of wanting to run away a contraction whatever it is that's all there you don't need to even analyze it because you just need to feel the entire energy field of that and it doesn't feel pleasant and it's it's the past in you so there you're observing the past in them acting out and you experience the past in you and so what do you do with two pasts you have the past out there and the past in here only presence can dissolve the past so you need to access the power of presence in yourself and how do you do that a quick way in a situation like this is the acceptance of whatever arises inside or outside at this moment you accept this is what you feel this is what they do or say there's the acceptance of the inner and the outer you say because it is already happening why you have to accept or you suffer in a way if you don't accept you suffer more if you don't want to feel what you feel that's more suffering because you're resisting acceptance does something that i could describe as let's say here's the emotional field and it doesn't feel good and

acceptance means just you say okay that's that is I can feel that I'm verbalizing acceptance doesn't even require after a little while you don't need words anymore you can just see what is be with it and at that moment a little bit of space opens up around that emotion a little bit of space that space comes from your acceptance the acceptance gives it space and that's already a little tiny bit of freedom you've given it a little bit of space inside yourself when you say yes this is what is and that's a beauty you've given both them space externally to be and you've given yourself space internally and then as you notice that actually that feels act feels already a little bit better than before because there's space around the emotion and then you go into it more deeply and you accept even more you continue to accept and that space grows a little bit around it and then you encounter the strange phenomenon of an emotion that is not pleasant existing in a spacious field so to speak that's around it and then you realize that who you are is you are that field and you can allow the emotion to be in that field and you can allow your parents to be there and say what they say and do what they do they are repeating the past space comes in so acceptance brings space and space is the transcendence of conditioning space is the transcendence of the past the transcendence transcendence of the personality and the person and it's freedom space that's the practice and so the best place to practice is with your parents there are many other places where you can practice but the ultimate mastery you will achieve when you can practice with your parents that's the graduation you graduate it's the phd in presence with don't jump into it too much don't if you say okay i'm going to spend a week with our parents now it's too much too much give yourself short time periods at first say i'm going to come for coffee and cake that's what they like to do at least my mother did i'll come for coffee and cake and i'll stay for an hour or you know if you can i don't know how that works practically but and then you practice you give yourself one hour to practice so that's a little you and you know it's only an hour i have to be present for an hour and it's your spiritual practice so the the as you know i've written the quote in a book ramdas said if you think you're so enlightened spend two weeks with your parents two weeks the ultimate test so happy practice

[Speaker 6] (9:21:01 - 9:21:53)

um my question is really about how to be in relationship to the polarization that's going on right now um i'm witnessing it happening you know especially within my country i'm from the united states and within my own family and then of course it's happening internationally uh and yeah i want to be the space for it but then as i'm you know just being here it seems like it just keeps getting worse and scarier and scarier on a lot you know when we talk about collapsing um so i just wanted to have some guidance on being in relationship to polarization and how to you know be of service or help you know those people that are in ideologies that are

[Speaker 1] (9:21:53 - 9:31:05)

getting more and more extreme well of course not to participate in it one can without knowing it slip into participation by by condemning those who seem to be the most unconscious side but of course all you do by condemning what seems to you the most unconscious side is you strengthen it and unwittingly you become part of the polarization you can state if you feel you can state your opinion we can have opinions without attacking somebody else just state that's that's how i see it so not your mind is where the you need to be vigilant it already is all taking place in your mind and that's where you you stay present or you lose presence your thoughts this massive collective energy mental energy movements they're a bit they're energy streams they're like huge clouds one could almost say of mental energy collective clouds generated by millions of people and it's very easy to get drawn into that and sometimes clouds of that kind can hover over a nation for several years and take possession of the individual person's mind leading sometimes to far more extreme polarizations than we are witnessing in the u.s at this time think for example of the spanish civil war about a million people spanish people killing each other within a family people even people being polarized in within one family killing each other between nationalists republicans communists or nationalists whatever they were called sometimes a mental cloud like that can take possession of almost everybody's mind and dominate the mind soviet communism or something like that when for many decades it was hovering over everybody's in the collective mental energy field there was these these very fixed ideas and views but many paranoid beliefs built into them the enemies and so on and of course the west reacted and to some extent something like that also rose not quite as strongly in the west but that was led to the cold so-called cold war paranoia paranoia is often a very big part of that but also those collective movements are really egoic they are collective representations of what is the ego on a personal level so what we are really seeing is vast manifestations of the ego in collective form and if if there's one thing that's more insane than the personal ego it's the tribal ego much more insane and once you join the tribal ego you become part of that it draws you to a much lower level of consciousness than you were originally so it can draw in nice people good people can suddenly get drawn into that and their level of consciousness goes and when that happens the good people are capable of perpetrating also acts of violence and or whatever forms of unconsciousness so they get drawn another of course big example of that national socialism germany 30s in the 30s 40s another huge egoic energy field possessing people's minds of course in a way generated by the by unconsciousness in individuals but becoming an entity almost that takes possession of everybody's mind so you need to see it for what it is it's not that there are these evil humans suddenly or however you see it and of course they say they say the other side is evil with paranoid beliefs and so on so it's not don't see it in personal terms you have to look through it to see the unconsciousness behind it it's a mental illness it's so it really is like an epidemic that from time to time takes possession of nations certain nations tends to happen more in bigger and more powerful nations it's a little less likely to happen in in denmark or holland besides they like to have a good time and smoke so they're more relaxed so don't uh it'll pass it will pass sooner or later this too will pass and

it is a form of ego can see it there magnified ego collective ego have compassion with all those who are drawn into that they are suffering from a temporary diminishment of mental capacities and it's a it is a form of illness they will get better eventually it's your responsibility in the meantime not to get drawn into that energy field in any way recognize it for what it is then compassion arises compassion towards both sides especially of course compassion towards the side that you perceive as unconscious and paranoid and so on you can still point out the what you see as the errors of certain views that are being expressed if you feel compelled to do that but you don't participate in this silly game of blaming accusing calling the other this or that don't you don't participate in that and stay peaceful realize it'll pass remember this phrase this too will pass and just be there as the the witness it's been happy it's happened periodically over the centuries and until humanity awakens will continue to happen so compassion stillness acceptance recognition what it is and then and all you contribute then is a different energy peace a more peaceful energy you're not part of it don't become even part of the the one that fights the unconsciousness as it's you can't you can't fight unconsciousness so enjoy

[Speaker 2] (9:31:32 - 9:31:39)

i'd like to ask you at guard what kind of guidance you would offer to people to remember or be aware

[Speaker 4] (9:31:39 - 9:31:49)

that they are we are creative force in a creative universe perhaps relative to

[Speaker 5] (9:31:49 - 9:31:54)

what we wake up and see in our world today thank you

[Speaker 1] (9:32:20 - 9:45:15)

the awakening process has two aspects or two dimensions to it one is the finding the source within as yourself touching the stillness being the stillness the alert stillness then bringing that into your life more and more so that your daily life becomes interspersed with that stillness as your daily life becomes interspersed with the alert stillness the ego begins to fade and you embody a different energy field and a completely different as if something from another dimension were coming through you into this world at the moment we are only talking about this just about and then we'll get to the next stage so first of all is to bring rather than think what it is what kind of doing can happen that comes a little later first let's see the most essential thing is a foundation for all subsequent awakened doing as i sometimes call it the foundation for all subsequent awakened doing because the world is full of people who are doing but it's mostly unawakened doing not all but mostly and so the doing creates all kinds of karmic repercussions and basically comes out of unhappy states and creates more unhappy

states in others and in the doer so our first task is to bring that dimension the other dimension almost one could say into this world in your daily life not yet even contemplating or thinking about any change or any doing just with normal life what you're doing normally in everyday life see if presence can flow into the smallest things into listening to another person into walking from here to there into performing tasks into dealing with things into just more and more presence implies acceptance always of whatever is in the now in a alignment with the form of the now as a spiritual practice and then more and more as the more you're aligned with the form of the now the more of this energy comes through and so this happened i'll give you just one example in myself the this form the it happened over several years that there wasn't any but any doing but this was different it was a different time and it there's an acceleration now and so on that's that's there was several years past and there was simply an the energy coming through more and more so to speak more becoming aligned with that new energy that was coming through before any doing happened and so it's vital for us to be grounded in the in the presence in your life but that doesn't necessarily take years anymore these days that's but grounding in presence is vital alignment with the present moment so that any doing it does not come out of dissatisfaction with the present moment there's no there's no awakened doing then no presence in it so the foundation then is continuous acceptance of the isness of now and then through that presence arises more and more you work with the present moment as your teacher so to speak any situation anything it is as it is always this moment is as it is and it's so you bring a yes to it and with that the presence comes so there isn't an entity that says i need to change the world because this isn't right you have to first come to an acceptance of the isness of things not the world situation just your limited reality now and then after a little while you will notice that there is another aspect to presence it's not just still there's also a dynamic aspect to presence and that's where awakened doing comes in and that may come first it comes into it changes the way in which you deal with other people people around you more presence no less and less ego lessening of conflict and then one day some insight comes suddenly there's something else that wants to be done that needs doing that i i you might perceive it as that something that i need to do and that comes out of presence and suddenly you know what it is that you need to do could what it is nobody can tell you it comes from within or it comes from without as some a new situation arising in your life and then awakened doing begins to happen and that is that doing is not the egoic doing where the whatever you do is a means to an end because the end result is always more important than the doing the doing is self-contained it is there's deep enjoyment in the doing there's not an excessive desire to achieve but you achieve actually more because there's so much joy in the doing that the end result looks after itself so a very different kind of doing arises that is not motivated by desire that's the normal way is says i need to achieve this even people who have think i need to create a better world if it's still that if it's an i need that because then i will feel fulfilled there's still the desire behind it but as presence moves through you it's not based on desire anymore it's based on enjoyment it's not based on wanting or needing anything because

you're coming from fullness the action is not designed to fulfill you is not designed to add something to you the action is coming out of the fullness in which you already dwell so there's no neediness in it if obstacle arise as they will it anybody who takes a course of action especially if you do things that go against the conditioning of the world you may find obstacles you may also find enormous power helping you both obstacles will come in the form of uncooperative people occasionally or situations that don't go the way they're supposed to go enormous power will also flow into what you do and help you in many ways and bring just the right thing just at the right moment just the right person just at the right moment but when obstacles do arise again what we're talking about there's no they're not regarded as enemies the ego regards any obstacle to its course of action as an enemy either a person and then it gets upset and angry and starts fighting it but with the awakened doing an obstacle is accepted for what it is and you work with it never against it or you work around it or you take its energy and go with it and then turn it around it becomes incorporated into what you have to do remember this we talked about a zen meditation that has no structure to it the essential zazen meditation you're just sitting and anything that arises is embraced as part of your meditation in that similar way when awakened doing happens there's no enemy you don't see any more enemies in the form of unhelpful situations uncooperative people everything is embraced for what it is accepted for what it is and transformed by that and that's the awakened doing so you it's not so much that you are doing it you become a vehicle for the doing it happens through you and the power comes when it wants to come it's a uh for several years after the shift that happened to me there was no but there was occasional not much happened in the external and after that gradually people came to ask questions so there was some doings happening or some speaking happening like answers were suddenly coming and then that lasted for several years and i i knew somewhere there's more there's a power here but it's not reaching many people for some reason it wasn't happening yet and that was fine i was happy people to come once or twice a week people would come ask some questions doing a little workshop here a little workshop there and then big spaces was just sitting there it was fine and then at some point i was once in a church a country church in england tiny church built in the year 1100 in a small village in in somerset and in the church i was sitting completely empty in stillness and suddenly the words came out of me that said i don't know who i was talking to use me and i'd like acceleration please the words don't where they came from i don't know and so the the consciousness was listening it seems so at first nothing happened i went back home and then a few weeks later i woke up with knowing that i had to leave england although i loved it i had to move to the west coast of north america not knowing why and that was the beginning i moved to the west coast eventually the writing started there but that was the other acceleration happening i didn't know when i woke up a few weeks later with that thought that that was part of the acceleration that i had asked for and then it accelerated more and more first the power came the writing power then gradually and the book came out and then very quickly just went be careful with what you ask for and here's just i'm not doing any of this i don't have the sense that i'm i'm doing any of

this i just go where people ask me to go and do ettv you think that's a good thing yes
okay let's do it